

*Related
to
Greek
Mythology*
R A P E:

OR, THE

Innocent Impostors,

A

TRAGEDY.

Acted at the

Theatre-Royal

By Their

MAJESTIES SERVANTS.

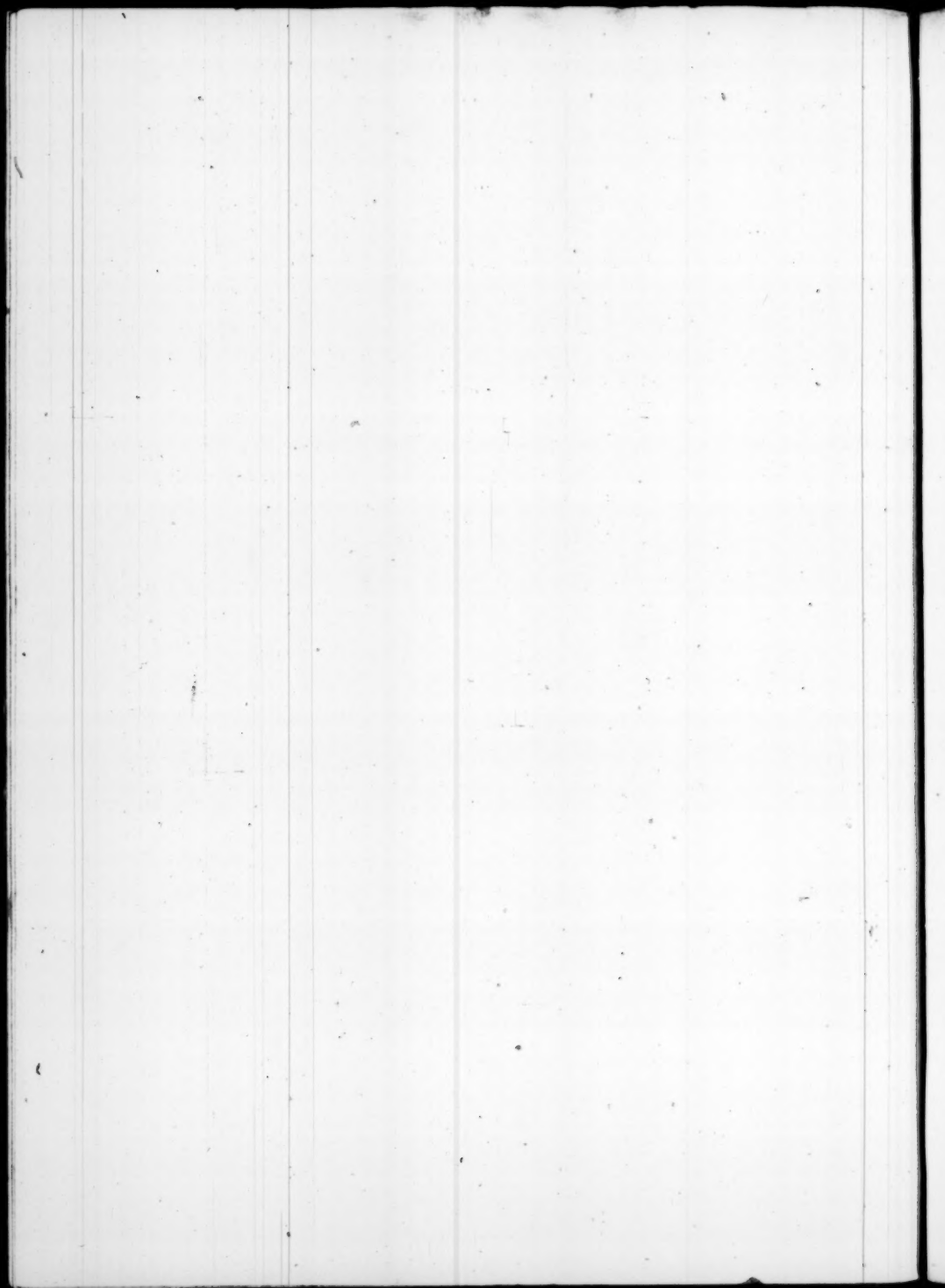
Written by Dr. Brady.

Διὸς δ' ἐπλήετο Βυλὴ.
Hom.

First Edition.

L O N D O N,

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To the Right Honourable

CHARLES

EARL OF

DORSET and MIDDLESEX, &c.

My Lord,

WEre I not sufficiently assured, that your Candour is as great as your Judgment, I should not have expos'd the following Trifle to your Lordship's Censure; whose discerning Eyes would not fail to discover the smallest fault, did not your Goodness draw a veil over them: It is to that I humbly offer up this youthful Essay, which aims no higher than to obtain your Pardon, since it cannot pretend to your Approbation, having nothing to recommend it, but the Zeal of the Presenter: And this, my Lord, has been growing up with me from my earliest Years; that extraordinary Genius, and those admirable Qualifications, which distinguish your Lordship
from

The Dedication.

from the rest of Mankind, having created in me a proportionable respect and Reverence for their Owner, as soon as I was capable to taste true Sense, or to relish the excellency of those Writings with which your Lordship has sometimes been pleased to oblige the World. But as these Considerations gave me a very great Esteem and Veneration for your Lordship; so that which raised them to the highest degree imaginable, is that hearty Zeal, and unaffected Sincerity, with which you daily labour to support the Interest of that Government, for which I have been no inconsiderable Sufferer: And as this engages me in your Lordship's Service with all possible Devotion, so give me leave to hope that it entitles me in some measure to your Lordship's Protection; since the very same Principle causes us mean ones to suffer for it, which engages those of your exalted Quality to strengthen and uphold it; namely, a true Affection to the Protestant Religion, and the English Liberties; Both which were visibly struck at, and had infallibly been overturned, had not Providence made use of their present Majesties to rescue and relieve them. But I forget that I am robbing the Publick, while I detain you from your more serious Employments; I shall only beg
your

The Dedication.

*your Lordship not to judge of the respect I bear
you by the meanness of this Present; but to be-
lieve, that I shall always look upon the Honour
of your Lordship's Patronage, as too great a
Recompence for all my former Sufferings; and
that no Title can be more considerable to me,
than that of,*

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most Obedient,

Most Obliged, and

Most Humble Servant, &c.

PROLOGUE.

Spoke by Mr. BETTERTON.

TIS not long since when the well judging Age,
View'd nicely all the Labours of the Stage?
Then ablest Writers hardly purchas'd Praise;
Which now each puny Scribler gets with ease.
True Nature then and solid Sence took place,
Now awkward Farce prevails; with dull Grimace.
Thus little Poets cheaply get a Name,
Whilst Nokes, and Leigh insure the Author's fame.
It were less strange if such lewd Toys as these
Did the loose Race of Capring Monfieurs please:
Who still their Judgements like their Stomachs treat,
Loath hearty Dishes of substantial Meat,
And Write and Judge as slightly as they eat.
But why should English, who in both excel,
And always us'd to feed, and judge so well,
Be now content on Snails or Herbs to dine;
And for light Kick-Shaws quit the lusty Chine?
Were our great Ben alive, how would he rage!
How would he scourge the folly of this Age,
And lash the Vermine who infect the Stage!
Who with so little Nature, and less Art,
A Theater would to a Booth convert:
For shame redeem your Credit, and forbear
To favour Drolls, such Piteous Smithfield Ware:
Try if to Night you can digest a Play
Cook'd in the plain, but wholesom English way.
'Tis no new fashion'd Mess, nor savour'd strong
With Poignant Sauce, of Dance, Machine, and Song.
It boasts no gaudy Scenes to Court the view,
And to save Wit, but little Musick too.
Nay, what is worse, prepare for Mortal noise,
Trumpet, and Drum, instead of Flute and Voice.
Yet let no Beau, who hears the frightful sounds,
Start, or look pale at thought of Blood, and Wounds.
But Cock, talk big, and hide his growing fears:
A Play-House Drum ne're beats for Volunteers.

EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE

By Mr. SHADWELL.

Spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle.

How full of Beaus this Circle does appear
Who hate all Camps, and will not leave us here,
For all the Fame of Talbot, Sydney, Vere.
'Las a Beau's tender, subject to catch cold,
And a rough Camp will make one look so old;
The cold so pinch, the heat so tan his Face,
He ne'er can ogle more with any Grace:
Poor miserable Beau is quite undone,
The lustre of his dear Complexion gone;
Besides Wounds in the Face, alack! and Woe!
Some cruel Bullet may cut off a Beau:
Out on't, who but a Sot would not prefer
Pulvillio to Match and Gunpowder?
Or who would leave, so careless of dear Gut,
Locket's or Long's, for a vile Sutler's Hut?
Or would lie cold in Tents, or hard in Trenches,
Rather than in warm Beds with pretty Wenches?
Sweet Sparks do you continue in good mind,
Let others follow Drums, stay you behind.
You profitable Bees yield Wax and Honey,
To Poets Matter, and to Players Money.
If you, dear Beaus, should have so little Wit,
For grinning Honour your Delights to quit,
How should we want you inside Box and Pit.
Spite of old English Magnanimity,
Be you from Foreign fighting ever free,
And let us have your sweet Society.
Discourse at home of Van and Flank and Reer,
And rout French Monsieurs o'er a Bottle here,
But to the filthy Camp pray come not near.

Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

Gunderic,

Genfelaric,

Briomer,

Albimer,

Rodoric,

Almeric,

Agilmond,

Valdaura,

Amalazontha,

Rhadegonda,

Eurione,

Merinda.

Mr. Betterton.

Mr. Williams.

Mr. Hodgson.

Mr. Zibber.

Mr. Freeman.

Mr. Harris.

Mrs. Butler.

Mr. Mic. Lee.

Mrs. Betterton.

Mrs. Lee.

Mrs. Bracegirdle.

Mrs. Richardson.

THE
RAPE:
OR, THE
Innocent Impostors,

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Palace Garden.

Enter Briomer and Albimer.

Brio. **H**AS the King din'd? —

Albi. — He has; and the rich Fumes
Of *Corfick* Wines, which he too freely swallow'd,
Have made him vain; now he fights o're his Battels
Of 20 Years, and numbers all his Conquests;
Whilst the base Herd of Fawning Courtiers screw

Their servile Looks to seeming Admiration,
And cry him up a second *Alexander*.

Brio. Could you endure the fulsom Pageantry;
Or be the Echo to their loose Applause?
You could not sure; a generous Disdain
Shoots from your Eyes, and tells me, every Boast
Of this Vain-glorious King brands us for Slaves:
For sure the Haughty *Vandal* could not miss,
In all his Catalogue of former Triumphs,
That which made us his Vassals. —

Albi. — No, he did not:
That was his labour'd Theme, his darling Topick,
The *Gothish* Conquest! that he justly stil'd
His Valour's Master-piece; began the Story

B

From

From the first Breach ; not sixteen tedious years
 Had worn away the slightest Circumstance :
 And while he spoke, the Honourable Wounds,
 Which for my slaughter'd Master I took nobly,
 Seem'd to bleed freshly at it, like a Corpse
 In presence of its Murtherer——There I left him,
 And, in the midst of all his vain Harangue,
 Stole from the Presence. But no more : the King
 Is come to walk ; let us observe at distance.

Enter Gunderic, Genselaric, Ferrismond, Guards and Attendants.

Gund. Was it not brave ? Speak thou, *Genselaric*,
 For thou wert near me still, and thy keen Sword
 Well copy'd out the Deaths which mine had drawn,
 As if thou lik'dst the Great Original ;
 Was't not a glorious day ?——

Gen. ——Yes, Royal Sir,
 A day which should in *Vandal Annals* stand,
 Redeem'd from time, in Golden Characters,
 When dreadful *Rhadagaise*, the Valiant *Goth*——

Albi. (aside) 'Tis the same hateful subject ; let's retire. [*Ex. Briand*]

Gund. Thou speak'st him right ; well he deserv'd that Title, (*Alb.*
 Whom haughty *Rome* with twenty thousand Talents
 Brib'd high to quit her wasted Provinces,
 And thought it easie purchase. Him return'd,
 With all his Fame about him, I attempted ;
 Him in the head of all his Troops encounter'd,
 Nor shun'd he my Assault. Like two large Comets
 That blaze in opposition we appear'd ;
 Our waiting Armies watch'd the dreadful shock,
 And in our lifted arms was wrap'd the fate
 Of thousand Vulgar Souls.

Then, my *Genselaric*, then *Ferrismond*,
 For you were present too, how did we tug
 For Empire and for life ! 'till cover'd o're
 With well-plac'd Wounds, the *Gothish* Monarch sunk,
 And my superiour Fortune triumph'd o're him.
 By Heav'ns ! I could have hug'd my dying Foe,
 Almost have envy'd him, he fell so nobly !
 And made me sweat so hard for glorious Conquest !

Fer. If such his Fame, (and he deserv'd no less,)
 What then is yours, who bravely overcame him ?

Gund. Right, *Ferrismond*, and 'tis for that I prize
 This Conquest more than all my other Trophies ;
 In all my chase of Fame, I never met

A braver Foe : for this his Captive Queen

And all his Females I preserv'd ;
The Males, to make my Conquest more secure,
Embrac'd their Father's Fate.

Gen. ——— 'Twas fitting Policy.

But, sacred Sir, your Pardon, if I dare
To sound the Secrets of your Royal Bosom,
And humbly beg to learn why you design
To wed the eldest of those Princely Orphans
To *Agilmond*, our lovely Prince, and graft
A Captive Cien on your Royal Stock ?
Now must I beg to know, what known will blast me.

[*Aside.*

Gund. Ple tell thee, Nephew,
For thou art brave, and therefore 'tis I love thee.
Ten years I reap'd the precious sweets of Love
Without success ; for tho' my fruitful Queen
Was blest with numerous Births, yet all were Female
A Sex unfit for Sway ; and my large Conquests
Must have been parcell'd out to Neighbour Princes,
As they grew ripe for Wedlock : Thus I murmur'd,
Till angry Fate snatch'd all my blooming Offspring,
And crush'd them in the Blossom——

Gen. ——— I remember,
'Twas just before the *Gothish* Expedition :
And soon the heat of War dry'd up your Tears.

Gund. It did——

But when I parted from my Queen, I left her
Just ready to lay down another Burthen ;
Then grief and rage forc'd out this Solemn Vow :
If still you blast my Hopes, and your full Womb
Again disclose another Female Birth,
By my just rage it dies.——This said, we parted.

Gen. Something like this was buzz'd about the Court,
Scatter'd in Whispers by the attending Ladies ;
But soon it dy'd ; and I had almost lost
The loose remembrance, 'till your words reviv'd it.

Gund. Th' Event of things soon bury'd it : For Fate
Shook at my dire Resolve, and as o're-aw'd,
Cast in a Nobler Mold her pliant Issue,
And Stamp'd it with the Image of a Man.
The welcome News, by winged Couriers born,
Found me returning from my *Gothish* Conquest,
And cover'd o're with Lawrels.——

Gen. ——— What could Fate
Do more, than make you great at once and happy ?
Than give at once two such important Blessings,
A Kingdom and an Heir ?

Gund. 'Twas much indeed : And I with fitting joy

Receiv'd the mighty Presents——

But oh! *Genſelario*,

How little do my preſent Comforts answer
The large Idea which my thoughts then form'd!

The Prince, my Valiant Nephew——

Gen.

——Sacred Sir,

Give your thoughts vent; and oh! forbid it, Heav'n,
That Sigh ſhou'd be occaſion'd by the Prince,
The lovely Prince.

Gund.

——The lovely Prince indeed,

And there thou ſumm'ſt his Praise: I wiſh thou could'ſt,
Inſtead of that faint Epithet, have put
The Manly or the Valiant: but alas!
His outward Compoſition ſhews him Woman
In all things but the Sex; and much I fear
His very Soul's a Woman. Balls and Dances,
The Converſation of conceited Ladies
And fluttering Courtiers, are his chief delight:
He loves not Arms, to break the Warlike Steed,
Or dart the well-aim'd Javelin. Is he fit
To hold the Reins of ſtubborn Conquer'd Nations,
To keep my Fame up, and convey my Glory
To Ages yet to come?——

Gen.

——His tender years

Are yet unripe for Action; time may change
And form his thoughts to a more Manly temper.

Gund. 'Tis true indeed, it may; but that forc'd Smile

In which you dreſs your Face, ſeems to inform me,
That you my Armies headed at his Years,
And brought home Victory. Here lies my Grief,
The Remedy's behind. The conquer'd *Goths*,
Who brook my Sway uneaſily, though rank'd
With my own *Vandals* both in Truſt and Favour,
Yet wiſh a Prince whom they may call their own.

Gen.

I have of late obſerv'd a ſullen haughtineſs
In moſt of them; the ſign of forc'd Reſpect,
And ebbing Duty.——

Gund.

——If to me they pay

But an unwilling Service, what muſt *Agilmond*,
Weak *Agilmond* expect, unleſs ſecur'd
By politick defences? Therefore 'tis
That I deſign to wed him to *Eurione*,
The eldeſt of the Captive Princeſſes;
That ſo her Title may ſecure his Intereſt,
And the reſpect they pay her Father's Blood
Blot out the Hatred which they owe to mine.

Gen. But, Royal Sir, forgive me, if I tell you

The Prince is much averse to this design,
And all the Tribute of his Heart and Eyes
Are to the younger paid, the proud *Valdaura*.

Gund. Too well I know it, but I know as well
To make my self obey'd : *Valdaura* ! no,
Her Temper's too imperious ; in her Face
I see the fierceness of her Father's looks ;
It is not safe to plant too near my Throne
One of her haughty nature. But I trifle ;
My Resolution's fix'd unalterably,
Nor dares he thwart my Will,——
Who have a double Title to his Duty,
As Father, and as King. Go you, *Genselaric*,
Attend the Prince, and bid him wait my Pleasure
Upon the Terrace Walk.——

[*Exeunt* *Gunderick*, *Ferrismond*, *Guards* and *Attendants*.]

Gen. solus. Death to my hopes ! he's fix'd unmoveably,
And all my Wishes blasted : But shall I,
Who nobly past through twenty rough Campaigns,
Tamely look on, and see a puling Boy,
A young effeminate Stripling, ravish from me
A Mistress and a Crown ! It must not be :
Let Patient Slavish Fools drudge on, and bear
Th' uneasy Yoke of forc'd Obedience ;
Such tame results as those never attend
The Lover and the Brave——Ambition single
Shou'd be too strong a Match for feeble Virtue ;
But when
Almighty Love does with Ambition close,
What Force can their united Pow'r oppose ?

[*Exit*.]

SCENE a Chamber-Royal.

Enter *Rhadegonda*, *Eurione*, and *Valdaura*.

Rhad. Altho' the Honour *Gunderick* designs
Our ruin'd Family by this Alliance,
Be greater than our humble hopes cou'd aim at :
Yet still methinks a melancholly Cloud
Hangs on *Eurione*, and seems to tell me,
The Prince's coldness damps her comforts more
Than all his Father's kindness can assure them.

Eur. Madam, I must confess the Prince's coldness
Disturbs my troubled Breast ; but 'tis because
I blush to think that one who shares your Blood
Should live to bear a slight.——

Val. ——Oh ! my lov'd Sister,

How

How well that thought becomes your Royal Birth
For the Prince,

Think not, *Eurione*, charming as he is,
That I will e'er receive his loath'd Addresses,
Though lately paid with undisssembled fervour :
His slight of you provokes my hatred more
Than all his Court to me can raise my love.

Rhad. Be careful though, my Daughter, how you treat
The youthful Prince ; and since you must deny him,
Mix no disdain to make refusal harsher :
Humility and Meekness best become
The Conquer'd and the Captive. ———

Val. ——— True, we are so,
I mean our Bodies, but our Souls are free, ———
Those he cou'd neither Captivate nor Conquer :
The *Vandal* Triumph is too great already ;
Let's not encrease it, Madam, nor allow
That it can reach our minds ———

Rhad. ——— No, my *Valdaura* ;
Just Heav'n forbid that *Rhadagaise's* Widow
Shou'd own a thought so mean ! but fit it is
We shou'd dissemble ; since a short Complaisance
To all the Actions of our future life,
May give unbounded Freedom. — You, *Valdaura*,
Retire a while ; and when my faithful *Briomer*
And *Albimer* arrive, conduct 'em hither.
Now, my *Eurione*, disburthen now
Your swelling Breast of its uneasy load,
And breathe your Grievs into a Mother's Ear :
Love is no Crime, and sure the Prince has Charms
Sufficient to excuse a Female fondness ;
Nor did you love unsought ; and if your Passion
Continues still to Flame when his grows cold,
Unhappy it may make you, but not faulty.

[Exit *Valdaura*.

Eur. Blest be those Friendly and Relenting Pow'rs
That have inspir'd your Breast with such indulgence !
'Tis true, I love, still love th' ingrateful Prince ;
False as he is, he's the same Charmer still,
Lord of my tender'st and most dear Affections :
And though I dare not to my Rival Sister,
Whose Spirit awes me, own my lasting Passion,
It burns as bright as ever. ———

Rhad. ——— Cherish it :
Valdaura's scorn will quickly send him back
To find a gentler Treatment in your Love :
Besides, the King commands him, and his Will,
Though ne'er so rash, when he is once resolv'd,

The Innocent Impostors.

7

Cannot be safely thwarted.——

Eur. ——— Still I fear ;

For sure my haughty Sister cannot long
Resist the lovely Prince.——

Rhad. ——— Fear not, *Eurione*,

Take it upon a Queen, and Mother's word,
Valdaura cannot wrong you. But no more,
She comes, and with her *Briomer* and *Albimer* :
Withdraw a while, and try to ease your Griefs
With pleasing hopes of his returning Passion.

[Exit *Eurione*.

Enter Valdaura, Briomer, and Albimer.

Welcome, my Noble Friends ; you that continue
Faithful and just to ruin'd Majesty,
I waited for your coming.

Valdaura, sooth

Your Sister in her Error ; 'tis not safe
To trust her with the mighty secret yet.
Have you, my Lords, dispers'd the weighty News
Amongst my Faithful *Goths*, that yet a Prince
Of *Rhadagaise's* Royal Blood is living,
And if they dare but struggle for their Freedom,
Will soon appear to head them ?——

[Exit *Valdaura*.

Brio. ——— Madam, we have,

And they with undisssembled joy receiv'd it,
But mix'd with some Distrust ; they seem to doubt
The mighty Blessing ; but assur'd of that,
They vow to Sacrifice to his just Interest
What e'er they hold most dear.——

Albi. ——— Nor are they weak

In number, or in quality ; the King,
To banish all resentment from their minds,
And make them fond of Slavery, admits them
To Offices of Profit, and of Trust ;
The very Troops that Guard him are not free
From *Gothish* mixture.——

Brio. ——— These are all our own,

And once confirm'd that they have yet a Prince
Of your Illustrious Line, will soon shake off
The *Vandal* Yoak, which now unwillingly
They bear, and seat him in his Father's Throne.

Rhad. They know me, and my Royal word's to them.
Sufficient Confirmation ; but to you
I will unlock the Secret, how I sav'd
And kept conceal'd a Treasure of such value.
But here we are too open ; let's retire

Into

Into my private Closet ; there we'll share
A joy too great for me alone to bear. [*Exeunt. Briomer drops a Paper.*]

Enter Genselarick and a Lady.

Gen. The Princess indispos'd ! and will admit
No Visitants ?——

Lady. —— My Lord, she's just laid down
To take some rest, to which of late she's grown
A Stranger.——

Gen. —— May her sleep be soft and quiet
As that of Infants——Whilst my waking thoughts, [*Exit Lady.*]
Are as disturb'd as Dreams of guilty Men.
Ha ! what is this ;——

[*Takes up a Paper folded.*]

—— Though 'tis not generous
To pry into the Secrets of another ;
A Lover, near the Chamber of his Mistress
May plead a just excuse for being curious. [*Opens it, and Reads.*]

My Lord,

YO U may safely depend upon my Intelligence ; I have it from no
worse a hand than our Royal Mistress's ; therefore be assured that
when your Party is fully formed, a Prince of her own Blood shall ap-
pear to head it. Meet me without fail at the appointed place and time,
where I will inform you farther:

How's this ? a Faction forming ? and a Prince
Of Gothic Blood to head it ? this confirm'd
By her who best should know, the Captive Queen ?
Is then the cruel Policy of *Gunderic*
Deceiv'd, and a surviving Male yet left
To take sharp Vengeance for his slaughter'd Kinsmen ?
Kind Fate that brought this Secret to my hands,
Meant not it shou'd be useless : this well manag'd
May either serve my Interest, or my Love,
Perhaps may forward both : let me consider——

Enter Roderick and Almerick.

Rod. This way the General went——

Alm. —— See there he stands ;
And by the fix'd composure of his look,
Something uncommon fills his working thoughts :
Let's wait a while.——

Gen. —— The destinies of Men
Are not more surely Character'd

In Fate's eternal Volume, than mine here.

Suppose I tell the King,

One of these two fatal Evils must attend it:

Either his Rage flames high, not to be quench'd,

But by the Blood of all that Royal Race,

And so I give my Mistress up to Slaughter:

(Horror and Death! it shocks my Soul to think it.)

Or if his Policy shou'd curb his Anger,

The Fatal Match between the Prince and her,

To settle things is hasten'd; and I throw

The only Person upon Earth I love

Into my Rival's Arms——

Confusion seize him! that must not, cannot, shall not be.

Rod. He seems disturb'd, as if his thoughtful Soul

Were fiercely toss'd betwixt two deep Designs,

And doubtful which to fix on——

Gen. Suppose I carry it to the Captive Queen;

And since the Lives of her and all her Nation

Are in my Hands, say I disclose my Passion

For bright Eurione, and make her the Price

Of my Important Silence; if that fails,

Add my Assistance too, to join in it;

By Heav'n it wears a forward face of hope,

For can it fail to take——it shall be so.

Alm. His looks clear up; the Resolution's taken,

Not what it will.——My Lord, we wait your leisure.

Gen. O! my best Friends, you come most opportunely:

I want your kind Assistance in some matters

Of mighty Moment; and so much I trust

Your well experienc'd Faith, I will not doubt

But you dare follow wheresoever I lead,

Although the Path I tread be full of danger.

Rod. My Lord, you judge us right; all our Employments

Are but your Gift, when the Ungrateful Court

Repuls'd and cast us off, you took us in,

Stemm'd the rough Torrent, dress'd us in fresh Honours,

And fix'd us near your self:

And if for you we forfeit all,

We pay but back your own.

Alm. ——Our Lives are Trifles,

Which for a Drunken-Friend we oft expose;

How shou'd we then refuse to lay them down

For you our Friend and Patron?——

Gen. ——Read this Paper;

The hand I guess; but to inform me farther,

Are you acquainted with it?

Rod. ——Let me see,

This Writing is familiar to my eyes ;
 And now the weighty matter it contains
 Instructs my Memory : 'Tis *Briomer's*.
 I oft have seen't when jointly we commanded
 The *Vandal* and the *Gothish* Cavalry ;
 Most certain 'tis his own. —

Gen. — It is not doubted.
 Now take the Darling Secret of my Soul ;
 I'll turn my Heart quite outwards to your view,
 Nor shall one thought escape you. O, my Friends,
 I love *Eurione* ; love her beyond Victory
 Ravish'd from valiant Foes, that made Success
 Hang doubtful long. —

Rod. — She's destin'd for the Prince ;
 And if I err not much, her Inclinations
 Bend that way too. —

Gen. — They're bias'd by her Interest ;
 He's Heir to mighty Kingdoms, she a Captive.
 But wave we that ? You see the dreadful Secret
 Contain'd within that Scrawl ; dare you join it ?
 I'm sure you dare ; dare any thing, but basely
 Desert a Friend that trusts you with his life,
 Nay more, his Love —

Alm. — We are your Creatures, Sir,
 And are resolv'd to move as you direct us.

Rod. Besides, this blest occasion wakes the memory
 Of former wrongs, which call aloud for Vengeance.

Gen. Let me infold you thus ; in this Embrace
 I tie my Fortunes to you : in our walk
 We'll settle matters further. —

As some rich Merchant, when the Billows roar,
 Holds fast one Casket full of precious Store,
 Whilst all his meaner Treasure's tumbled o'er :
 So while Love's safe, securely I survey
 Fame, Profit, Honour, Virtue, cast away.
 Rather than see my Darling Love distressed ;
 Let wide Destruction swallow all the rest.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE, a Terrace-Walk.

Enter Gunderick.

THE Prince's ill-plac'd love to proud *Valdaura*,
With the loud Murmurs of my *Gothish* Subjects,
Distract my careful thoughts by Day, and haunt
My restless Dreams by night. Hard Fate of Kings !
Whose outward Grandure only serves to guild
The Slavery they undergo within !
And yet these Ills admit one common Cure,
His Marriage with *Eurione*, a Remedy
Which must not be delay'd ; their Discontents,
And his loose Passion, if we give them time,
Will daily grow more strong ; it is resolv'd,
And Fate, if it had otherwise decreed,
Shou'd sooner change than I. —

[Enter Agilmond.

Agil. — I was inform'd
Your Majesty commanded my Attendance,
I had not else presum'd to interrupt
Your private thoughts —

Gund. — Come nearer, *Agilmond*,
Nor think your Presence interrupts my thoughts,
For they were full of you. —

Agil. — I could not wish
To fill a Nobler Scene ; yet humbly hope
That melancholly Cloud which shades your Brow
Was not occasion'd by the thoughts of me.

Gund. And yet it was : For you, my *Agilmond*,
My careful Brain toils daily, and my Sleeps
Are nightly broken ; all to make you great,
And to that Greatness happy —

Agil. — Royal Sir,
If still I hold your Favour, I am both ;
In that my Greatness lies, in that my Happiness.

Gund. Priz'd you my favour at so high a rate,
You wou'd not dare to contradict my Will ;
A Will whose chief and only aim it is
To make your Fortunes certain : Put not on
A Face of seeming Ignorance, my meaning
Is soon unriddled ; why are your Addresses
So coldly paid to fair *Eurione*,

Your destin'd Bride ? My Will has made her such ;

And yours, if mine you valu'd as you ought,
Shou'd hand in hand go with it. —

Agil. Your Pardon, Sir,
'Tis worfe than Death to me to disobey you;
And yet 'tis worfe than that to marry one
I cannot love. —

Gund. ——— How ! cannot love ? take heed,
It is not safe to dally with my Anger :
Is she not Chast and Fair ? Of Royal Birth
And Princely Education ? flows there not
A winning Sweetness from her ? Is there ought
That's hard in this Injunction ? —

Agil. ——— Only this,
'Tis hard to force Affection : fair *Eurione*
Has Charms to Conquer any Heart, but mine.

Gund. 'Tis then because that Heart of yours is steel'd
With Disobedience : but no more — *Valdaura*,
The proud *Valdaura*, whom you know I hate,
She is the Darling Object of your Love :
And doubly disobedient as you are,
You shun what I desire, and fondly seek
What most I loath. —

Agil. ——— 'Tis my Unhappiness,
To have my Actions undergo so harsh
A Misconstruction : but to prove my Innocence,
And that I am not what your Anger styles me,
Stubborn and Disobedient ; be you pleas'd
To cancel the Commands you laid on me
To wed *Eurione* whom I cannot love,
And I will quit all claim to fair *Valdaura*,
Nor see, nor speak to her. —

Gund. ——— By Heav'n, the Boy
Begins to Article, and I must treat
On equal terms, and meet him half the way ;
Whilst his Compliance but keeps pace with mine,
Moves just as far, no farther. Hear me, you
That dare thus trifle with your King and Father,
Hear this my fix'd Resolve :
By all my Glory, by my thirst of Fame,
And my great Name in War, to Morrow's Sun
Shall see you Wedded to the fair *Eurione*,
Or never more acknowledg'd as my Son.

Agil. O Sacred Sir ! call back that dismal Vow ;
Kill me, and I will kiss the hand that does it ;
But oh ! condemn me not to loath'd Embraces ;
See, on my Knees I beg it. —

[Kneeling and Embracing his Knees.]

Gund.

—— Loose your hold.

Or I will force my way ; thou ! that art Manly
In nothing but in Disobedience ;
That too is Womanish, 'tis Willfulness
A Female Vice ; no more, you know my Will,
Prepare to meet it— [*Breaks from him and Exit. Agilmond lies down.*
Agil. —Rather to meet my Death,

For that must be the fatal Consequence.
Thus my sad Sentence runs, [*To Morrow's Sun*
Shall see you Wedded to the Fair Eurione :]
To Morrow's Sun will then disclose a Secret
Which Sixteen Years have faithfully conceal'd :
Unhappy *Agilmond* ! thy latest Glass
Of Life is running now, and the last Sand
Will steal away to Morrow.—

[*Enter Amalazontha.*

Amal. —I met the King
With Fury in his Looks, regardlessly
He past along, and in a surly tone
Bad me, go teach my Son Obedience.
See, there he lies ! alas ! is that a Couch
Fit for the Heir of Mighty *Gunderic* ?
What means my *Agilmond* ? what sawcy Grief
Usurps a Breast so dear to me as thine ?
And yet I fear to ask, for sure it is
Of Mighty Weight, that bows you to the Earth
As you were rooted there.—

[*Sees the Prince.*

[*Goes to him.*

Agil. —Forgive me, Madam,
That must alarm your Ears with sounds more dismal
Than Groans of Mandrakes, or the Scritch-Owl's Note ;
The Croaks of Ravens at a Sickman's Window
Would be but Musick to the News I bear.

Amal. Alas ! what means this dreadful Preparation ?
Is the great Secret of your Sex disclos'd ?
Has *Gunderick* discover'd what you are ?
He has not sure ; for as I enter'd here
He spoke to me of you, and call'd you Son.

Agil. 'Tis true, he has not yet ; but oh ! to Morrow.
To Morrow he has vow'd that I shall wed
Eurione, and then the fatal Secret
Must needs be known ; and well you know his Vows,
However rash, are obstinately kept.

Amal. —Too well I know it ;
Nor is this Vow the first. O ! cruel *Gunderick* !
Was't not enough, rash and inhuman Prince !
That when this precious Burthen fill'd my Womb,
You doom'd it then to Death ? but must I now,
When Sixteen Years have made it dearer to me,
And ty'd it to my Heartstrings, see it snatch'd

By thy unnatural and savage rage?

Agil. Be witness, Heav'n, how little that afflicts me!
Your Danger sinks me, under that I bend,
Unable to sustain it. Permit me, Madam,
To dye for both; to Morrow dooms me;
Let me but dye now;
And the important Secret dies with me,
And gives new life to you. —

Amal. — No, *Agilmond*,
Our Case is dangerous, but not desperate:
Through all these Clouds I spy one Ray of Hope
Break brightly forth, and gild the horrid Scene:
Eurione is Virtuous and Discreet;
We'll trust th'important Secret to her knowledge;
And sure she will not scruple to assist
Two Royal Suppliants. Come, my *Agilmond*,
Wait on the King, and seemingly comply,
Leave the Event of things to me and Heav'n;
The Gods that watch'd to guard your Infant state,
Will save you still, and their own Work compleat.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE A lonely Walk within prospect of
the Palace.

Enter Briomer.

Curse on my Negligence! to lose a Paper
Of such a vast Concern! my life's wrap'd in it;
My life's a trifle; but the lives of all
My Countrymen, nay ev'n the Queen's and Prince's
Are by my fatal carelessness expos'd.
The best that I can hope, is that the Queen
Her self has found it; yet suppose ev'n that,
How wretched must I be! How should I look
On one so much endanger'd by my Folly! [*Enter Gen. Rod. & Alm.*]
O that I had it! tho' for every Letter
I paid a ruddy drop of that rich Blood
Which warms my Heart, I should not think it dear.

Gen. He's here! and by that gloomy look confirms me
The Writing was his own, and that already
He has mist the Letter; wait a while without
And be not seen, I'll find him at a distance. [*Ex. Rod. & Alm.*]
My Lord, I have observ'd, for Friendship's Eye
Is quick and piercing, in your Face of late
Unusual Mixtures, seriousness and joy;
As if your busy Soul were burthen'd with
dangerous.

Brio. Your Eyes, my Lord, are ill Intelligencers,
To represent as things of Weight and Moment,
The sudden Starts of an uneven temper.

Gen. And yet I fear your Tongue has scarcely given
So just an Information as my Eyes.

But wave we this discourse : hear you no News ?

Brio. Not I, my Lord ; 'twas always my Opinion,
That Curious and Inquisitive were names
Fit for the softer Sex. —

Gen. ——— I'll tell you then.
'Tis whisper'd to the King that still a Prince
Of *Gothish* Blood is living. —

Brio. ——— Ha ! what says he ?

[*Aside.*

Gen. Now you, my Lord, if such a one there be,
Can sure inform me of't. —

Brio. ——— Dreams, idle Dreams :
For were there such, I could not but have known it.

Gen. Why so 'tis whisper'd too ; and that your self
Now form a Faction to assist his Cause
Amongst the discontented *Goths*. —

Brio. ——— My Lord,
I know my Duty to my General :
Had any other dar'd to speak these words,
My Sword e're now had been unsheath'd, to right
My injur'd Honour.

Gen. This Paper would have forc'd it back again, [*Shews the Letter.*
And nail'd it to the Scabbard.

Brio. ——— 'Tis the same,
And he's alone ; blest opportunity !
My Lord, you have my Secret ; but you must
Restore me that, or with it take my life. [*Draws. Gen. claps his whistles.*

[*Enter Rodoric and Almeric, they rush on him and disarm him.*
Gen. I will be forc'd to neither ——— Disarm him. So ;
Give me his Sword : now leave us to our selves, [*Ex. Rod. and Alm.*
And on your lives no word of what has happen'd.

Brio. What shall I judge
Of these Proceedings ? Base at once and Generous ?

Gen. You seem to be surpriz'd, and your amazement
Is too well grounded to create my Wonder :
Yet think not that I summon'd these to help me
Because I fear'd your Sword ; you know I fear not ;
But could not wound the Breast of one I honour,
Nor suffer you to kill the Friend that loves you.

Brio. My Lord, I understand you not, your words
Are full of Mystery :
But could you be a Friend to so much Misery,
'Twere noble to excess. —

Gen.

——I can, and will be.

Believe me, *Briomer*, 'tis a Solemn Truth,
I hate this *Gunderick*, this Tyrant, more
Than happy Men the thoughts of Death with Torture;
And if there be a Hatred beyond that,
I hate the Prince yet more.——

Brio.

——'Tis wondrous strange!

So favour'd, so belov'd!——

Gen.

——Grant all this true,

That I am great in Favour, and in Trust;
If they at the same time tear from my Heart
The only Person that my Soul is fond of,
And give her to th' Embraces of another;
Does not this cancel all?——

Brio.

——'Tis true indeed,

That injur'd Love admits no Compensation.

Gen.

This is my case: now tell me, *Briomer*,
What may that Man deserve, that being Master
Of this important Secret, which commands
The Lives and Fortunes of a mighty Nation,
Not only locks it safe within his Breast,
And buries it in silence, but breaks through
The Solemn Ties of Duty, and of Blood,
To tempt an equal hazard, nay, to make
By his assistance the Attempt secure,
And past the fear of failing.——

Brio.

——He deserves

What e'er his forward Wishes can aspire to,
What e'er a rescu'd Nation can bestow.

Gen.

Cou'd this, or more, deserve the fair *Eurione*,
I durst perform it for her: now you have
The mighty Secret: tell me, my Lord,
May I have leave to hope?——

Brio.

——Not only hope,

But Certainty attends you. I dare pawn
My yet untainted Honour, that the Queen
Will give a glad consent: your Birth is Princely,
Your Fame is great, and what you now design
Is more than Kingly.——

Gen.

——Take your Sword, My Lord;

And that I may not leave a doubt upon you,
Thus I disperse your fears.——Now take me to you, [Tears the Letter.
And mould me as you please.——

Brio.

——Welcome, brave Sir,

Be this Embrace the Seal of lasting Friendship
Between us two; I'll lead you to the Queen,
Who shall confirm all that your hopes can aim at.

The Innocent Impostors.

17

Gen. O my best Friend, make good this mighty Promise,
And Heav'n it self has nothing more to give me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE a Chamber-Royal.

Enter Eurione, and Merinda.

Eur. The fence of former Happiness encreases
Our present Misery ; and the fresh remembrance
Of those dear Vows which *Agilmond* once paid,
Does but imbitter more his late neglect.

Merinda, sing the Song I so well lov'd,
Since *Agilmond* grew false.——

SONG.

How long must Women wish in vain
A constant Love to find ?

No Art can fickle Man retain,
Or fix a roving Mind.

Yet fondly we our selves deceive,
And empty Hopes pursue ;
Though false to others, we believe
They will to us prove true.

But oh ! the Torment ! to discern
A Perjur'd Lover gone ;
And yet by sad experience learn
That we must still love on !
How strangely are we fool'd by Fate,
Who tread the Maze of Love !
When most desirous to retreat,
We know not how to move.

Enter Amalazontha.

Mer. Madam, the Queen.——

Amal. What, fair *Eurione*,
Indulging still those melancholly thoughts
Which prey upon your inward Peace, and cloud
The lustre of your Eyes ?

Eur. My thoughts and looks
Are such as well become the humble Fortune
Of our unhappy House.

Amal. Fortune's unjust
To wound such Innocence (yet I must join

In her Unjustice too) I come, *Eurione*,
To put your Virtue to a mighty Tryal;
To trust you with a Secret of such weight
As must admit no other Ear but yours.

Eur. Merinda, wait without—Madam, you honour me, [*Ex. Mer.*]
To think me worthy of so great a Trust;
Nor can I e'er be guilty of such baseness,
As to abuse so generous a Confidence.

Amal. 'Tis that belief makes me unlock my Heart,
And give its darling Secret to you; know then,
To Morrow *Gunderick* designs to wed you
To *Agilmond*; blush not, *Eurione*,
The Chast and Virtuous Love you bear the Prince
Carries no Guilt along with it; and sure
The Gods themselves inspir'd you with that Love,
To save his life and mine——

Eur. ——Can any danger
Threaten such precious lives? O! bless me, Madam,
By making me the happy Instrument
Of saving them, though at th' expence of mine.

Amal. We would not purchase ours at such a rate:
But, generous *Eurione*, prepare
To hear surprizing News; summon your Virtue,
For you will need it all: Suppose I come,
Like early Frosts, to nip your blooming hopes,
And blast the Fruit for ever.——

Eur. ——Hope of late
Has been a Stranger here. I well perceive
Your Majesty approves not of that Honour
The King designs me; and I cannot murmur,
But mourn my want of Merit.——

Amal. ——Fair *Eurione*,
Mistake me not, I grant you merit all things;
And were he capable to meet your love,
How gladly would I forward it!—— *Eur.* Not capable?
Alas! the killing word! My Rival Sister
Has Charms, I find, too strong for me to strive with.

Amal. Still you mistake me; take it in a word,
My *Agilmond*——But see we are prevented.

Enter *Gunderic*, *Rhadegonda*, *Agilmond*, *Valdaura*, *Genselarick*,
Ferrismond, *Rodoric*, *Almerick*, *Briomer*, *Albimer*,
Guards and Attendants.

Embrace the offer which the King will make,
Till I inform you farther.——

Cond. Though Right of Conquest, and the chance of War

The Innocent Impostors.

19

Have firmly join'd the *Gothish* Crown to mine ;
Yet still methinks Possession seems uneasy,
Since you, my Royal Sister, are a Mourner :
And whilst your Tears attend my yearly Triumphs,
That Scene of Sorrow dashes all my Joyt,
And palls the Taft of Pleasure.——

Rhad. —Tears, my Lord,
Are a just Tribute I must hourly pay
For *Rhadagaise's* loss.——

Gund. —Forget it, Madam,
And suffer yours, like other Griefs, to find
A cure from time.——

Rhad. (——They will, I hope, and soon.)
No time, my Lord, can ever end my Griefs,
But that which ends me too——

[*Aside.*
To him.

Gund. —Hope better, Madam ;
Or if time fails, let me your kinder Comforter
Prescribe a cure ; a cure which shall at once
Heal all your Griefs, and dry up all your Tears,
Or change the sad and melancholly Current
To chearful Streams of Joy. Draw near, my *Agilmond*,
And trust a Father's care to make your life,
And all the remainder of your time to come,
Happy at once, and Great.——

Agil. —I stand prepar'd
To meet your Royal Will with full Obedience.

Gund. Come to my Arms, thou Comfort of my Age.
Dare you to my Disposal, Madam, trust
This Beauteous Princess?——

[To *Rhad.*

Rhad. —She is yours, my Lord,
So are we all, your Captives, and your Slaves ;
How should we then deny to be dispos'd
By you, our Master, and our Conquerour ?

Gund. The Names of Captive, and of Conquerour
This hour shall cancel, and blot out for ever ;
But for the mighty Trust you now repose,
Thus low I bow to thank you. Noble Nephew ;
And you, my Lords, attend to what I say.
Though the rough hand of War first ty'd the Knot
Which binds together both my Diadems,
Yet the soft bands of Love shall fasten it.
Approach, fair Virgin, and receive from me,
The greatest Present *Gunderick* can make,
My *Agilmond*, and with him both my Kingdoms ;
And if my flattering hopes deceive me not,
In giving him, I give the greater Gift.
Why are you silent, lovely Innocence ?

Methinks the vastness of a Gift like this
Should justly challenge Thanks.——

Rbad. —— Impute her Silence
To Maiden Modesty, and her just surprize;
A Virgins Tongue moves only in her looks,
And she in Blushes speaks her glad consent.

Gund. My Wishes are compleat; nor shall our joys
Be cramp'd by dull delay. To Morrow's Sun
That yearly Celebrates my *Gothif's* Triumph,
Shall shine with double Light, whilst to his Splendor,
Their Marriage-Torch shall add a brighter lustre.
My Lords, prepare to grace the wish'd Solemnity
With all becoming Honours. You, *Genselaric*,
Draw forth my Troops, and see the Pomp set off
With all the glorious Pageantry of War. [*Exeunt omnes, prater Genselaric, Rodoric, and Almeric. Agil. drops a Dagger as he goes out.*]

Rod. takes it up.

Gen. Confusion on them all! How could I stand
Thus tamely by, and see my panting Heart
Pluck'd from my trembling Bosom fresh and bleeding
By this inhumane King? Am I a Coward?
Answer me, Friends, am I that wretched thing?
I must be sure; I could not else look on,
And see the Tyrant ravish from my Soul
All it holds dear and precious.——

Rod. —— 'Tis a patience
Extreamly hard to practice; nor could you
So well disguise your thoughts, but that I fear'd,
The King, when he address'd himself to you,
Wou'd have discover'd something.——

Alm. —— 'Twas most lucky
That he retir'd so soon; for I perceiv'd
Your Forehead glow, your eager Pulse beat fast,
And your full Breast swell at the harsh injunction.

Gen. By Heav'n's he mock'd me——“You, *Genselaric*,
“Draw forth my Troops, and see the Pomp set off.
Yes, I will set it off; but in a manner
They little think of; now, by all my wrongs
It is a Noble thought: draw near, my Friends,
And swear on this good Sword to undertake
Whatever I desire; nor shall the danger
Be yours alone, I'll share in all the hazard,
And shoot the Gulf as well as you——

Rod. I swear;

To execute whatever you command;
Nor Racks, nor Tortures shall deter me from it,
Or force the weighty Secret from my Bosom.

Alm. I swear the same.

Gen.

Gen.

—O! let me rivet you
For ever to my Breast, the truest Friends
That ever Man was blest with. Listen both,
And to your Bosoms I'll impart a business
Would startle any Courage less than yours.
I must enjoy *Eurione*, or die;
This Night, the Eve of all my destin'd Sorrows,
Shall make me blest, and revel in full Joys.
The Princess every Night, as I'm inform'd,
Walks singly forth, and in a lonely Arbour
Enjoys her private thoughts; the place I know;
Thither we'll haste, and, shrouded from all eyes,
Expect her coming, seize the trembling Prey,
And rifle all the Treasures of her Beauty:
Then if the Prince feasts on her Sweets to Morrow,
He shall have but the leavings of my Riot.

Rod. Th' attempt is full of hazard; but to make
Our after-game more safe, take my Advice,
As a sure means to free us from discovery.
Know you this Dagger?

Gen. —Yes, 'tis *Agilmond's*,
Remarkable and known to all the Court.

Rod. As he went out he dropt it; in the Crowd
I stoop'd and took it up, but had no time
To give it him. Take it, and when your Sences
Are surfeited with Pleasure, drop this Weapon
Near to the Ravish'd Princess: this will be
Ten thousand Witnesses against the Prince,
To fix Suspicion of the Deed on him.

Gen. 'Tis well contriv'd, nor can it fail to hit:
His long profess'd Aversion to this Marriage,
Though late he faintly gave a forc'd Assent,
Will make it pass unquestion'd; and the Walks
That lead unto this Scene of killing Joy,
At such late hours are barr'd from all our Sex,
Except the King and Prince. 'Tis fit we hasten,
That while the Pass is open we may enter,
And lie conceal'd. Methinks I see already
Her dying Looks, her seeming faint Resistance,
And feel the mighty Transports of hot Love!
Let but Success on this blest Moment wait,
The rest of Life I freely leave to Fate.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T

ACT III.

SCENE a Chamber-Royal.

Enter Agilmond and Amalazontha.

Agil. **T**He King is gone to Bed, the busie Courtiers
All scatter'd and dispers'd; but I in vain
Shou'd seek for rest, till first I know what past
In your late Conference with *Eurione*.

Amal. I found her, *Agilmond*, (for I must yet
Give you that name) compos'd throughout of Sweetness;
And I ne'er wish'd more earnestly you were
What you pretend to be, than for her sake,
Who pants for you with all the modest warmth
Of Innocence and Love.—

Agil. —Alas! I pity her.

Amal. When first I told her I must blasphe^m her hopes,
Something that look'd like Anger seem'd to rise;
But as a Stranger, soon was banish'd thence,
And sunk to humble Sorrow.—

Agil. —'Twas a sight
Wou'd have affected the most Savage heart,
To see such mourning Virtue.—

Amal. —First, she thought,
Or seem'd to think, that her small Stock of Merit
Bred my dislike of the intended Marriage;
But undeceiv'd in that, her jealous thoughts
Suggested to her straight, that all your love
Was on *Waldaura* fix'd, her haughty Sister.

Agil. And did not that opinion shock her temper?
For sure she has a Soul above her Sex,
If yet unmov'd by such Assaults as these.

Amal. Still the same meekness, still the same composure.
I told her then that she was yet mistaken;
And just as I was going to impart
The mighty Secret of your Sex, the King
Attended by your self and all the Court,
Enter'd the Room, and hinder'd the Discovery.

Agil. 'Twas most unlucky. When I parted from you,
As you advis'd me, I found out the King,
Humbly implor'd his Pardon, and assur'd him
I was in all things ready to obey him:
He press'd me close, commanded all to follow,
And led us streight to you, and to *Eurione*.

Amal.

Amal. Late as it is, 'tis fit you see *Eurione* ;
Disclose your Secret to her; and instead
Of those returns of Passion which she looks for,
And which you cannot pay, offer such Love
As tender Sisters to each other bear :
Tell her, the glorious Title of a Queen,
And all the dazling Pomp of Royalty
Are hers, if she complies.——

Agil. ——Madam, I go.
This clear calm Night will tempt the Princess forth
To her lov'd Solitude; there I'll surprise her,
And to her private ear disclose my Secret,
Soft Rest attend your Majesty.

[Leads her to the Door, and Exeunt severally.]

SCENE a Night-Piece of a Garden.

*Enter Genselaric disguis'd, coming as out of an Arbour,
and peeping about.*

I wonder that the Princess comes not yet ;
'Tis past her usual hour ; and shou'd she fail,
How miserably wretched should I be !
Fool that I was ! like an unthrifty Gamester,
To venture all my stock of Happiness
On one uncertain chance ! Hift, *Rodoric*, *[Enter Rodoric and Almeric*
And *Almeric* ! discern you nothing yet ? *(disguis'd.)*

Rod. Nothing. You need not whisper so ; there's not
A living Creature within hearing of you
Besides our selves.——

Alm. ——The Court is gone to rest.
The Windows all are darken'd, except one
That's in the Lodgings of the *Gothish* Queen ;
And see, a light darts through the Gallery,
And seems to move this way.——

Gen. ——It is the Princess ;
She's now undress'd, and comes to take her walk.
By Heav'ns, I see her yonder ; quick, retire,
And when she comes seize the attending Maid,
And stop her clamorous Throat ; leave me alone
To grapple with the Princess. Oh ! ye Gods !
How my full Veins swell, and my boiling Blood
Bubbles and foams, as it would break its Channels !
Sure my hot Flames will thaw her Ice, and melt
Her frozen Heart ; whilst rowling in her Snow,
I cool the raging burnings of my Fever. *[Exeunt as into the Arbour.]*

Enter Eurione and Merinda.

Eur. Methinks I have no mind to walk to night,
And yet an unseen Pow'r conducts me on :
I stumbl'd at my entrance, and upon
My heavy Heart hangs a dead Weight of Sorrow.

Mer. Pardon me, Madam, if I blame this Sadness,
When Fortune seems to court you with fresh Honours,
And all your eager hopes are almost Crown'd.

Eur. Alas ! my dear *Merinda*, Fortune's smiles
Are falser than the Tears of wicked Women :
And though she seems to promise fairly to me,
Yet my too truly boding Heart assures me
That I shall ne'er be happy. Fetch my Lute
To yonder Arbour, there I'll sit a while,
And try if Musick can compose my mind,
In which I nothing now but Discords find.
Not all the Royal Favours of the King,
Nor *Agilmond's* compliance with his Will,
Can bring me Comfort equal to those Fears
Which the Queen's doubtful words inspire me with.
Yet why should I despair ? perhaps the Queen
But dally'd with me ; and that Scene of Sorrow
Was drawn, to make my coming Joys look greater.
I'll trust my Fate : the Gods can never prove
Averse to Chast Desires, and Virtuous Love. [*Exit as into the Arbour.*]

[*Exit Merinda.*]

Enter Agilmond.

The solitude and silence of this Place,
Join'd with the native Horror of the Night,
Have fill'd my trembling Heart with doubts and terrours.
Alas ! how ill such Fears become this habit !
Ha !

What dismal shriek was that ? or was't my Fancy ?
'Tis there again ! I dare not venture farther :
Yet more ! defend me, Gods ! and guard me forth
From this most dismal place in Peace and Safety.

[*Shrieks within.*]

[*Shrieks again.*]

[*Exit Agilmond.*]

Enter Merinda with a Lute.

'Twas sure the Prince I met, he seem'd in haste
And discompos'd ; this was the cause I find
Of sending me to fetch her Instrument,
That she might meet the Prince with greater liberty.

'Twas

'Twas well I came no sooner ; now he's gone,
I'll see if yet her mind be out of Tune.

[Exit as into the Arbour.]

The Scene draws, and discovers Eurione in an Arbour, gagged and bound to a Tree, her hair dishevel'd as newly Ravish'd, a Dagger lying by her.

Enter Merinda with a Lute.

Mer. Madam, I've brought the Lute——Defend me, Heav'n !
What means this dismal Vision ! O, my Princess !
What barb'rous Villain, black as Hell could make him !
Durst bind those lovely Arms ? [Unbinding her.
O tell me, Madam,
What worse than Devil durst attempt yet farther,
For so the dismal Scene too well informs me ?

[Eurione falls down, Merinda a chasing her.]

Enter Valdaura in a Night-Gown.

Val. It could not be a Dream ; the mournful Accents
Of some distressed Creature pierc'd my Ears,
Like shrieks of Ravish'd Virgins : and just now
Entr'ing, I heard a Female Voice lamenting :
Who's that ? *Merinda* weeping ? Where's my Sister ?

Eur. Alas ! here's she that was *Eurione* ;
Now she is nothing but a loathsome Leprosie,
Which spread all o'er the *Gothish* Royal Blood,
Infects the Noble Race.

Val. ——— Alas, my Sister,
What killing words are these ? ——— [Kneeling by her.]

Eur. ——— Stand off, *Valdaura*,
And come not near me ; I am contagious sure,
And all chaste hands will blister that but touch me.
Were all the Gods that succour Innocence,
Deaf to my Cries, and blind to all my Wrongs ?
That no relenting Power would send one Bolt
To strike me dead, and save my Ravish'd Honour ?

Val. Ha ! Ravish'd said you ? Ravish'd ! name the Villain ;
That my fierce Wrath, like an impetuous Torrent,
May overtake and hurry him to ruine,
Preventing the slow Vengeance of the Gods,
Tell me : but know you speak not to *Valdaura*,
But to the Prince *Ambiomer*, your Brother,
For such I am ; and I will write my self
Such in my fell Revenge. Now, name the Villain ;
He lives too long already, by this Minute

That he is yet unknown.——

Eur. ——Alas! I know him not.

Disguis'd he came, as if he hid his Face

From Night it self; seiz'd like a Bird of Prey

His trembling Quarry; gag'd and bound me fast,

And then——Oh! let me die, and stifle so

The harsh remembrance!——Ha! what's this? a Dagger?

[Sees the Dagger.

Blest be the Friendly Pow'rs that sent me this

To heal my Griefs for ever.

[Going to stab her self.

Val.

——Hold, *Eurione*;

[Wresting it from her.

The Gods design'd not this for your Destruction,

But to discover who the Villain is,

And mark him for my Vengeance.——Is it possible?

[Looking on it.

By all our Wrongs, it is the Prince's Dagger.

Is he the Ravisher? Can so much Villany

Lurk under such a chaste and modest semblance?

Mer. My Lord, I met the Prince; he seem'd disorder'd,

And haste and fear were in his Gate and Eyes:

But though I found the Princess newly Ravish'd,

I could not think him guilty of the Fact,

Till this plain Evidence convinc'd me of it.

Eur. Was this a fit return for chaste desires,

And virtuous Love like mine?——

Val.

——Oh! the young Ravisher!

Here on my Knees I swear, upon this Dagger

(Which though a Villains, yet shall bind my Oath

As firmly as if Fate it self had Seal'd it)

My thoughts shall never know a Moment's peace,

Till I have drench'd this Weapon in the Blood

That warms his lustful Heart. *Merinda*, help,

Convey my Sister in; and at her Chamber

We'll lay the Method of our just Revenge.

[Exeunt.

SCENE a Night-Piece of a Wood.

Enter Genselaric and Almeric.

Gen. Still I'm in pain for *Rodoric*, and dread

The fatal Consequences of his stay.

Alm. The Ladder's breaking, caus'd by too much haste,

Was (I confess) unlucky; but suppose

The worst, that he is taken; all the Tortures

Invented by ingenious Cruelty,

Will never from his steadfast Faith extort

The smallest word to prejudice his Friend.

Gen. I neither doubt his Friendship, nor his Courage.

But oh! my *Almeric*, what mighty Transports

Am I induc'd for to him and you!

Me-

The Different Impostors

27

Methought, in one short moment I possess'd
The crowded joys of a long life's delight;
As if some friendly Power by Chemic Art,
Had drawn the Spirit of an Age's pleasure,
Contracting all into that happy Minute
To make the Cordial rich.—

Alm. ——— My Lord, your joys
Have made you wanton, but methinks 'tis strange
That Pleasure fore'd shou'd give such vast delight.

Gen. I hate a tedious Siege, but love to Storm;
'Tis Soldier-like :

But hark! I hear one whistle, answer him;
It must be *Rodoric* ——— And see he's here.

Welcome, my Friend, your fortunate escape
Quiets my mind, and makes my Joys sit easie.

Rod. My Lord, your better Genius, I believe,
Contriv'd my stay; for by it I have made
Discov'ries of great weight. ———

Gen. ——— You are your self
My better Genius, and direct my Fortunes
With as successful care, and with a Pow'r
As absolute as his. But say, my *Rodoric*,
What's the important Novelty? ———

Rod. ——— My Lord,
When disappointed by the Ladder's breaking
Of coming off, I silently return'd
To my old private Covert, near the Scene
Of your late Joys, resolving there to wait,
Till Fortune should present me with a way
To leave it unobserv'd: Scarce was I settled,
When first I found *Merinda* was return'd,
And mourning o'er her Mistress: then, *Valdaura*
Alarmed by her Sister's shrieks, arriv'd
With hasty steps ———

Gen. ——— 'Tis true, she struggled so,
I could not get the Gag into her Mouth
So soon as I design'd it. ———

Rod. ——— But, my Lord,
That which surpriz'd me most, as 'twill do you,
Was, that the haughty Princess in her Transport
Of furious Rage to find her Sister Ravish'd,
Own'd that she was the Prince *Ambiomer*,
And Son, not Daughter, to the *Gothish* Queen;
Her Sex (no doubt, for politick designs)
Thus long conceal'd. ———

Gen. ——— 'Tis most amazing News:
And yet ('tis true) I often have observ'd,

[*Whistling within.*

[*Enter Rodoric.*

And wonder'd at the Manly Air and Mein,
 The haughty Carriage and resolv'd Assurance,
 Of the suppos'd *Valdaura*. This is he
 Whom *Briomer* and all the *Gothish* Faction
 Design'd their head: This Secret must be manag'd
 With caution and discretion. But say, *Rodoric*,
 What of the Prince's Dagger? was that found,
 Or lay it there neglected? —

Rod. — All your Stars
 Have been at work for you to Night. The Princess
 Found it by chance, and with a sudden fury
 Had plung'd it in her Breast, but that her Brother
 Seiz'd and prevented her. Soon as he view'd it,
 He knew its owner; and whilst that was breeding
 Suspicion of his Guilt; *Merinda* told them,
 She met the Prince but just before, returning
 With fear and great disorder from the Garden.

Gen. 'Twas wondrous lucky. But what brought him thither
 At that late hour? —

Rod. — His ill, and your good Fate.

Alm. This sure with t'other Circumstance confirm'd them
 He did the Fact. —

Rod. — It put it past all doubt.
 The Prince rav'd high, and made them all retire
 With dreadful Imprecations of Revenge
 Upon the lustful *Agilmond*, for such
 His Errour stil'd him: Soon as they were gone,
 Finding all still and hush'd, I ventur'd forth,
 Mended my broken Ladder, and escap'd
 Unseen by any. —

Gen. — All this Night's Adventure
 Has met with such Success, that it could scarce
 Have happen'd better, had the Prince contriv'd
 To be his own Betrayer. But the day
 Begins to break; 'tis fit we all disperse,
 And gain our several Lodgings. Worthy Friends,
 Command whate'er is mine; 'tis all too little
 For the vast Service of this happy Night.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE a *Chamber-Royal.*

*Eurione is discover'd lying on a Couch, her hair dishevel'd
(as before) Merinda weeping by her.*

SONG to a Lute and Flutes.

I.

Beneath a gloomy Cypress Grove,
Within a dismal unfrequented Cave,
Sad, as the Mansions of despairing Love,
And dark and silent as the Grave,
The Ravish'd Philomela weeping lies,
Chief Mourner at her Honours Obsequies.

II.

A living Herse she's stretch'd along,
Grief does her active Faculties benumb;
Had not the Lustful Slave torn out her Tongue,
Her mighty Wrongs had struck her dumb:
Yet thus her silent Wishes mount the Skie,
"Give me Revenge, ye Powers, or let me die."

Musick to me! alas! 'tis lost upon me
As soon it might divert a dying Wretch
That's stretch'd upon the Engine of his Torture.

*Enter to her Rhadegonda, Valdaura, Briomer, Albimer,
and other Goths.*

Rhad. Behold, my Lords, the Ruines of your Princess!
See there the destin'd Bride of *Agilmond*,
Rish'd of all her Sweet's by his hot Lust
That should this day have wedded her. The stain,
Though chiefly ours, will yet reflect on you,
And brand the *Gothish* Nation with disgrace,
Unless you vindicate her suffering Honour,
By taking sharp Revenge. If ye are Slaves,
And would be so, bow down your servile Necks,
To cruel *Gunderic* and his lustful Son,
And bring your Virgin Daughters to be Ravish'd
By his voluptuous Race, as mine has been.
But if you bravely wish, as sure you do,
To break your Chains, and right your injur'd Queen,

Behold

Behold this Prince, his slaughter'd Father's Image,
No longer now *Valdaura*, but *Ambiomer*,
Constrain'd these Sixteen Years to shroud his Sex,
And in a Female habit shun the Rage
Of cruel *Gunderic* that doom'd to Death
The Royal *Gothish* Males. He stands prepar'd
To lead you on to Honour and Renown,
To Liberty, and what's yet more, Revenge.

Brio. Curs'd be that Coward, that denies to follow
Where such a Prince does lead : and doubly curs'd
Be he that shall refuse to take Revenge
For so much injur'd Virtue ! Royal Master,
Permit your faithful Subject thus to tender
His vow'd Allegiance ; and may young *Ambiomer*
In all resemble his renowned Father,
But his untimely Fate. —

Alb. & Goths. ——— We jointly wish,
And vow the same. ———

Val. ——— My Lords, I thank you all ;
And shall endeavour by my future Actions
To fix your Love and Service, but must blush
To see the tenders of your Duty paid
To this effeminate outside. Now 'tis fit
We should consult about the means and method
Of a secure Revenge. That *Agilmond*
Committed this foul Fact, the Proofs are pregnant ;
His Dagger dropp'd, *Merinda* meeting him
In haste and discomposure. —

Brio. ——— 'Tis most strange,
That he who was design'd this day to wed her,
Should be the guilty Ravisher. —

Val. ——— Perhaps
He look'd upon her as his Father's Slave,
And scorn'd to wed so low ; but he might safer
Have hugg'd a pois'nous Serpent in his Bosom,
Than such a thought as that. Perhaps he meant
By this last desp'rate Remedy to avoid
A Match he always shunn'd. 'Tis out of question
He did the Fact ; and our short time calls on us,
Not to dispute, but act : first let us seize him,
And when that's done, if he has ought to urge,
He shall have quick hearing. —

Rbad. ——— Sure his Guilt
Will keep him on his Guard, and make his Seizure
Almost impossible. —

Brio. ——— Leave that to me :
The General, his Cousin's firmly ours ;

[Kneeling.

And

And he by some Device shall train him out.
 Besides to cloak his Guilt, he will not fail
 To make his Visits early. This strong Cittadel,
 Where, Madam, you have kept your Royal Court,
 Is under my Command, and firmly Guarded
 By chosen faithful *Goths*. Here *Albimer*
 Shall, whilst you shift your Habit, and appear
 Like what the Gods design'd you, guard your Majesty.
 Let me find out *Genfelaric*: I'll pawn
 My Life, nay more, my Honour, that I'll bring
 The Prince within two hours to your disposal.
Val. We'll trust your management, but be sure you fail not;
 For if you do, though next my Royal Mother
 I hold you dear, by Heav'n's I'll take the Forfeiture.

[*Exeunt one way, Briomer the other way.*]

SCENE *The Palace-Garden.*

Enter Agilmond.

My last Night's Fears unhappily prevented
 My meeting with *Eurione*;
 'Tis fit she know the mighty Secret soon;
 For since the great Affair with which I labour,
 Has in suspense hung doubtful, Sleep has been
 A Stranger to my Eyes, and from my Breast
 All quiet has been banish'd.

[*Enter Briomer.*]

Brio. ——— Sure the General
 Has some important business, that detains him
 Abroad so long! he has all night been absent,
 Nor know I where to seek him. ——— Ha! the Prince!
 Can so much Villany be shrouded under
 So sweet an outside? sure it cannot be;
 He is abus'd; but that he may be clear'd,
 He must endure a Tryal first. ——— My Lord,
 I come, led by my Duty and Respect,
 To wait your Highness to the Queen and Princess.

Agil. I was just going to the Cittadel,
 Designing to surprize them. Lead me to them.

Brio. By all my Honours, he is innocent:
 He could not else with such an even Brow
 Treat of a Subject, which, had he been guilty,
 Had stung his Conscious Heart. ———

} *Aside.*

Agil. ——— Conduct me, *Briomer*;
 I long to see the Princess. Grant, good Heaven,
 That fair *Eurione* with pitying ears
 May hear my fatal Story; and may all

Those Pow'rs that of the Innocent take care,
Dispose her to be good, as she is fair.

[Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE, the Cittadel.

Enter Ambiomere in his own Habit, Albimer, Gothish Lords, &c.

Amb. **C**ould my sad Soul be sensible of Comfort
Whilst wrong'd *Eurione* is unreveng'd;
This day, the whitest day of all my life,
Had brought me wondrous joy; in which I first
Appear to be what Nature made me, Man,
And what my Birth design'd me for, your King.

Albi. To make that joy sincere and undisturb'd
(In which, as in your Griefs, permit your Subjects
To bear a share) let generous anger chase
All melancholly thoughts, and fix your eyes
On the near prospect of a brave Revenge.

Amb. My Lord, you counsel well; let Women grieve,
Unable to take Vengeance; but for us,
We'll make us Cordials of our great Revenge,
To cheer our sinking Spirits. *Briomer*
Is wondrous slow; the time is almost laps'd,
And he not yet return'd.

Albi. — My Royal Lord,
Doubt not his Zeal; the great design he manages
Will, if th' attempt succeed, make large amends
For such a small delay.

Amb. — I am to blame
To censure him of slowness: 'tis not that,
'Tis the fierce motion of my eager wishes,
That leaves the swiftest diligence behind,
Unable to keep pace.

[Enter a Goth.

Goth. — My Lord, the Prince
And *Briomer* are enter'd.

Amb. — For thy News
Take this: Draw up the Bridge, and on your lives
Let no Man have admittance. O, ye Gods,
I see that ye are just; and I your Substitute,
Will execute your Justice to the full
On this young Ravisher.

[He sits, the rest stand bare about him.

Agil. — Whither, my Lord, [Enter Agil. and Brio.

Have

Have you conducted me? I came to seek
The Queen and Princess, and you have led me
To faces that I know not.——

Amb. ——Seize the Villain, "[They seize and disarm him.
The lustful Ravisher.——

Agil. ——Ha! what means this language?
And what this usage? Lustful Ravisher!
And Villain! do these execrable Names
Belong to me? How am I chang'd o'th' sudden,
And grown a Monster?——

Amb. ——Yes, a fouler Monster
Than ever *Africk* bred.——

Agil. ——And what are you,
That dare so near my Royal Father's Palace
Thus use the Heir of mighty *Gunderic*?——

Amb. ——I am
The *Vandal* Scourge, reserv'd by Fate punish
Your bloody Father, and his lustful Issue:
You knew *Valdaura* once, now know *Ambiomer*,
For both are one; the sole surviving Son
Of *Rhadagaise* King of the *Goths*, and Brother
To wrong'd *Eurione*, or what's my Noblest Title,
Avenger of her Wrongs.——

Agil. ——This strange discovery
May well create my wonder, not my fear:
I cannot think, you will be so unjust,
To execute Revênge for Wrongs receiv'd
Upon my Innocence.——

Amb. ——A Ravisher!
And yet plead Innocence!——

Agil. ——Again that Name?
Instruct me by what dire mistake you brand me
With such a hated Title.——

Amb. ——See the Hypocrite:
With what a seeming Ignorance he sounds
My knowledge of his Guilt! Away with him,
I cannot bear his Presence. *Albimer*,
Be sure you guard him well: convey him straight
To the sad Queen, and to the Ravish'd Princess;
Perhaps the sight of such a dreadful Ruin
As his hot Lust has made, may wake his Conscience,
And draw a free Confession.——

Agil. ——Ha! what said he?
The Princess Ravish'd! Could the Gods look on,
And unconcern'd see so much Goodness suffer?
Nay, then I wonder not that they can see
My feeble Virtue wrong'd.—— [He is led off by *Albimer* guarded.

Amb. ——— But that the Proofs
Which make his Guilt apparent, are too strong
To leave a place for doubt, I should my self
Be shock'd to see his carriage : But he knows
His life's at stake, and therefore 'tis not strange
He acts his part so well. ———

Brio. ——— My Royal Master,
Thus low I beg you would compose your thoughts,
And hear your Servant speak. ———

Amb. ——— Speak on, my Lord,
My mind is calm, and I prepar'd to hear you.

Brio. Let me not meet your Anger, when I tell you,
I judge the Prince is innocent : Restrain
Your Passion, Royal Sir, and hear my Reasons.
The course of all his former life, renown'd
For Modesty and Virtue; his late coming
Unforc'd, unsent for ; his surprise and wonder
To hear that she was Ravish'd ; all these join'd,
Perswade me to conclude that he's not guilty
Of this most horrid Fact. ———

Amb. ——— I must confess
They carry wondrous weight : but sure those Proofs
Which fix the Guilt upon him, have no less.
But yet, my Lord, such is my Zeal for Justice,
I'll weigh things nicely, e'er I pass a Sentence
That cannot be recall'd ; for as I wish
To take just Vengeance for my Sister's Wrongs ;
So Heav'n forbid that Innocence should suffer
By my mistaken Rage. ———

Brio. ——— Now Blessings on you,
Such was your Father's temper. Give me leave
Humbly to offer something of Advice,
To try the Prince's Guilt ; propose to him
This fatal choice, to marry her or die :
If he be guilty, since he knows his life
Is in your free disposal, he will yield
To ransom that by wedding her ; if not,
His Royal Blood will prompt him to endure
Ten thousand Deaths, rather than marry one
That's Ravish'd by another : make this Tryal,
And as you find him Innocent or Guilty,
Absolve, or else Condemn him : for my self,
My jealous doubts bend all another way,
But they are yet too young ; when they grow riper,
I beg that to your Royal Ear I may
Impart my knowledge of them. ———

Agil. ——— With full freedom.

'Tis fit, in the mean time, we all prepare
To meet the rage of cruel *Gunderic*.

My Lord, how is this Cittadel provided?

Brio. So well, that it will mock the vain attempts
Of all the Tyrant's Forces, till our Levies
Are gather'd to an head, and strong enough
For us to take the Field. For underhand
We have been working long, and Warlike *Vinderic*
Will not be slow to join us.

Amb.

— I dare rely
On your known Faith, and long Experience.
Now, *Gunderic*, sit fast, or I will join
Thy Crown to that which thou Usurp'st of mine.

[*Exeunt*.]

SCENE the Anti-Chamber.

*A Consort of Martial Musick is heard for some time. Then
Enter Gunderic, Amalazontha, Genselaric, Ferris-
mond, Rodoric, Almeric, Guards and
Attendants.*

Gund. This day the *Goths* to my Victorious Sword
Gave up their long kept Freedom; and this day
Shall give them back the Liberty they lost;
Whilst all distinctions shall be blotted out
Of Victor and of Vanquish'd; *Agilmond*
Our pledge of Love, and theirs, *Eurione*,
Shall bind the Faith of Nations, and unite
Millions of Souls in Bonds of Love and Friendship.
Methinks I see their Valiant Offspring Reign
O'er half the Conquer'd Universe! whilst from
Their Mother's Line they Courage draw, from his
Both Courage and Success. —

Gen.

— He little thinks
How vain and barren all these hopes must prove.

Gund. Where is the Prince, the *Gothish* Queen and Princesses?
Methinks e'er now their Presence should have grac'd
The destin'd Triumph of this happy Day.

Amal. The Prince long since, as eager Bridegrooms use,
Went with Lord *Briomer* to the Cittadel,
To attend his lovely Bride.

Gund. 'Tis well: whilst we expect them, let us try
To make the lazie Minutes pass more pleasantly

Vand. Forgive me, Royal Sir, if I declare
Such News as will astonish and enrage you
Beyond what you have ever heard. —

Gund.

— What means

[*Aside*.]
A Dance to Hoboys,
Kittle-Drums, and
Trumpets. After
the Entertainment,
Enter a Vandal.

This most amazing Preface to your Story?

Vand. Dread Sir, I should not dare to utter it,
But that it can no longer be conceal'd.

Gund. Think'st thou my Virtue is so much declin'd,
I cannot stand the Shock of any Tidings
Which thou hast heart to bear? —

Vand. — My Royal Master,
Prince *Agilmond* —

Gund. — What is he dead? —

Vand. — Not so,

But you will be as much surpriz'd with wonder,
To hear that he is Seiz'd, Confin'd, and Guarded
Within the Cittadel. —

Gund. — The Prince Confin'd,
And Seiz'd! Remove the Madman from me.

Vand. Would I were mad, or any thing, or nothing,
So this were not a truth. —

Gund. — One wish thou hast,
For mad thou art — A Guard upon the Prince!
Within the Cittadel! P'th' heart of all my Strength!

Vand. When you shall know by whom he is imprison'd. —

Gund. Imprison'd! in the middle of my Guards!
By whom? There is no Mortal dares attempt
What thou relat'st. But speak what thou art full of;
I am content a while to hear thee rave.
By whom? —

Vand. — By young *Ambiomer*. —

Gund. — Madder still!

What Phantome is this young *Ambiomer*!

Vand. He is the *Gothish* Prince. —

Gund. — Furies and Hell!

How dar'st thou trifle thus with me? —

Amal. — What Prince?

Vand. Th' Heir Male to the late *Gothish* King. —

Gund. — Traitor,
I'll nail thee to the Earth —

Amal. — Hold, Royal Sir.

Vand. I wish my Death might cause that Peace within
Your Royal Breast, which I must banish thence.

Gund. A *Gothish* Prince! whence dropt he? from the Clouds?
Or is the Mushroom sprung up in a night?

Vand. The late suppos'd *Valdaura* is declar'd
Ambiomer, th' Heir Male to *Rhadagaise*.

Gund. What wondrous transformation dost thou talk of?
Valdaura turn'd into *Ambiomer*!

Amal. A most surprizing Secret! as important
As that Eve kept so long. —

[*Aside.*
Thou

Thou ever hast been held discreet and honest,
Thy Life had been a forfeit to my Rage.

Vand. And let it still be so if what I say
Prove in one tittle false.—

Gen. —Now *Briomer's*

Great Secret is disclos'd, the next is mine ;
But though he finds the *Gothish* Prince, he ne'er
Shall find the Ravisher.—

Rod. —He sooner shall
Reach up to Heav'n.—

Alm. —Or fathom Hell.—

Gund. —Indeed,

Valdaura still appear'd too rough and haughty
For that soft Sex ; her Spirit seem'd to threaten
Something above a Woman's heart.—

Amal. —'Tis true.

How often has my watchful Genius
Prompted my Soul, to what my foolish Mercy
Rejected then as cruel : Had I follow'd
That faithful Councillour, she long ago
Had perish'd as *Valdaura*, and not liv'd
To act *Ambiomer*.—

[*Aside.*]

—Well suppose this were
The *Gothish* Heir ; why should they chuse this time
To broach the mighty Secret ? By this Match
Their Party ev'ry day and hour had gain'd
New Strength and Vigour ; and their doubtful Game
Might have been play'd with greater hopes of winning.

[*To them.*]

Vand. The cause of such a quick discovery
Is yet behind, and 'tis a dismal part
Of my too dreadful Story. Fair *Eurione*,
Destin'd this day for *Agilmond*, last night
Was in her private walk surpriz'd, and rish'd
Of all her Virgin Treasure.—

Gund. —Ha ! what Ravish'd !

Vand. It is too true.—

Gund. —Oh horrid Villany !

What Hellish Furies have been busie here
To fill Mankind with Rage beyond their own ?

Amal. Ah, sweet *Eurione* ! my Heart weeps Tears
Of Blood for thee.—

Gund. Just Gods, could ye behold
So vile a Crime, and keep your Thunder in ?
But your Vicegerent shall perform the part
You have reserv'd for him. By you I swear,
Let me but know the Fiend, and he shall live
Whole years in Torment, roaring for Death.

But what's all this to *Agilmond's* Confinement?

Vand. There are so many pregnant Circumstances,
To fix the Guilt of this upon the Prince,
As caus'd his Seizure; and the sudden Publishing
Of what their Prudence longer had conceal'd,
But for this sad Conjunction.—

Amal. ————How! the Prince!
Believe him not; 'tis all Imposture, Sir.
My Son! my *Agilmond*! It is impossible:
She was to be his Bride.—

Gund. ————'Tis true, she was;
Nor could he have so furious a Passion,
Where he had shewn so much aversion still,
That I with greatest difficulty wrought him
To a consent of Marriage.—

Amal. ————You have reason.

Vand. The Gods can witness what I say is true.

Gund. Perhaps he scorn'd to make a Captive Princess
The Partner of his Bed; yet he's not proud.
Perhaps his hatred to her made him find
This only way to break the Marriage off.

Amal. Can you suspect such wicked Subtlety
Shou'd dwell with so much Youth and Innocence.

Gund. My thoughts are in a mist, I am confounded;
'Tis time must clear up all. But for the new

Ambiomer, and his Confederate Rebels,
My swiftest Vengeance shall o'ertake their fault.
Shall *Gunderic* endure to be out-brav'd

By a smooth Boy that scarce knows how to act
The Manly part his fear so long conceal'd?

Then let my numerous Conquests be forgotten,
And my vast Fame shrink to the basest Titles
Of Slave and Coward. Let us face the Traitors;
We'll not allow them time to hatch new Treasons,
But crush them in the Shell. *Genselaric*,

Get my old Troops together: *Ferrismond*,
Draw out the Guards: you *Rodoric* and *Almeric*,
Go raise the City-Bands, and lead them hither.
By Heav'n! I'll see if this *Ambiomer*

Have ought that's worthy of his Valiant Father.
Make haste, my Lords, we'll gain the Cittadel
E're night, or bury it and them in Ruins.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE the Cittadel.

*Enter Ambiomar, Rhadegonda, Briomer, Albimer,
Gothish Lords, &c.*

Amb. Though all our present hopes seem small and cramp'd
Within these narrow Walls, yet know, my Lords,
The mightiest Empires had the same beginning :
Imperial *Rome* her self in one poor Hamlet
Took her first rise, and from that single spot
O'er-ran the Conquer'd World. —

Brio. — If Hearts as good,
And a much better Cause than theirs, can promise
Equal Success ; we need not doubt but Fate
Will give to our just Arms as ample Progress.

Rhad. The Valiant *Vinderic*, who for thirty years
Successfully did fight your Father's Battles,
Though silver'd o'er with Age. yet tempts again
War's doubtful hazard : and to assist your Cause,
Before to Morrow's Sun has touch'd the West,
Will at the head of thirty thousand *Goths*
Come to receive your Orders. —

Amb. — His Arrival
Will make us strong enough to quit this Fortres
And take the Field. Gods! how I long to meet
The haughty *Vandal* ! and with equal Arms
Retrieve th' immortal Honour of our Name,
Lost by my slaughter'd Father ! *Albimer*,
How fares the Captive Prince ! does the young Lion
Struggle, and bite his Chain ? —

Alb. — My Lord, he bears it
With as much calmness, as the Soul endures
The Prison of the Body : he expresses
Some Sorrow, but no Anger. —

Amb. — When you carry'd him
To see the Ravish'd Princess, could he brook
The sight of her unmov'd ? —

Rhad. — Let me resolve you,
For I was present then. Soon as he enter'd
And view'd her in her solemn Pomp of Grief,
He melted into tears ; but when he heard us
Reproach him as the Author of her Ruine,
Unable to reply, he deeply sigh'd,
And fainted in the Arms of *Albimer* :
When, by his care reviv'd, he round him cast
A wild, disorder'd look, then fix'd his eyes

Upon *Eurione*, and softly told her,
He never had the Will, and had he that,
He wanted Pow'r to wrong her; there he stop'd,
And struggled with himself, as if he labour'd
With something fit for us to know, and yet
Unfit for him to tell. —

Amb. — His inward guilt
Then stuck him to the quick, and prompted him
To make a free Discovery; but the danger
Which threaten'd that proceeding, stifled it,
And kept him silent still. —

Rhad. — If he be guilty,
(As I can neither yet condemn nor quit him)
Never did any Guilt wear such a Mask
Of well-dissembled Innocence. —

[Enter a Goth.

Goth. — My Lord,
The Captain of the Guards, sent by the King,
Desires admittance. —

Amb. — Let him have it. *Briomer*,
Conduct him in: Now, Madam, we shall hear
How *Gunderic* repents our bold Attempt:
I know it grates his haughty Soul, to find
A Rival Prince, that dares affront and brave him
Just at his Palace Gates. — [Enter *Ferrismond* and *Briomer*.

Fer. — My Royal Master,
Not knowing yet which 'tis more fit to call
The new-found Prince, *Valdaura* or *Ambiomer*,
Commands me, Madam, to demand of you,
Why on this solemn day, design'd to make
You and your Nation happy, you attempt
To frustrate and abuse his good intentions;
To seize the Sacred Person of his Son;
Shut up his Royal Cittadel; disturb
The common Peace; and with rebellious Arms
Provoke the Indignation of a Prince,
Who sixteen years has nourish'd you and yours
With tenderness and love? —

[To *Rhad*.

Amb. — Yes as a Guardian,
That flaunts and revels with his Ward's Estate,
But keeps him bare and scanty. Royal Madam,
Permit me, if you please, to give an Answer
To this so lofty Message. Tell your Master,
My slaughter'd Father, and my ravish'd Sister,
Call both for just Revenge; the one on him,
The other on his Son: My Royal Birth,
And *Rhadagaise's* Great Example, prompt me
Rather to dye a King, than live a Slave: —

This

The Innocent Impostors.

41

This Fatal Day, which blushes to set off
The yearly Pride of *Gunderic*, calls on me
To rescue it from such a shameful Office,
And make it shine again in *Gotth's* Annals,
Stamp'd with the glorious Mark of Regain'd Liberty.

Fer. For fair *Eurione's* lamented Fate,
My King vies Sorrow with you ; and engages
His Royal Word, to punish that Offence,
Where-ever prov'd, tho' on the Prince himself ;
With utmost rigour ; this his love to Justice,
And pity of her injur'd Innocence,
Oblige him to perform. — For you, my Lord,
And those whom your Example or Perswasions
Have in your Guilt involv'd, thus he ordains,
Give up the Cittadel, and jointly try
With humble Duty to appease his Anger,
And he'll impute this rash and heedless Action
To Heat of Youth, and to the sudden Passion
Caus'd by your Sister's Wrongs. If you refuse,
He comes prepar'd to force you to Obedience,
And crush you with his Vengeance. —

Amb. — Sure he thinks
I am *Valdaura* still ; and that my Soul
Is of the Female Stamp ; he would not else
Propose such servile Terms, as feeble Women
Would almost blush to stoop to. Let him not
Despise me, that some years my Manly Limbs
Were clad in Female Weeds ; so was *Achilles*,
And from less glorious Motives. Tell your Master,
Ambioner will ne're submit the Cause
Of his wrong'd Sister to such partial Justice,
But will himself Examine and Revenge it :
Say, I was born a King, and scorn to dye
With any meaner Title : For his Threats
I heed them as I ought ; when e'er he dares
Attempt our Strength, we dare oppose his Fury,
And with Superiour Force and Valour break
His weak Efforts. Return this Answer to him.

Fer. Since you refuse to taste his Royal Clemency,
Prepare to meet his Vengeance. — [Ex. *Ferrifin* and *Briom*.

Amb. — Wait him forth.
My Lords, we must expect to be assail'd,
And speedily ; the Rage of *Gunderic*
Will, like a sudden Whirl-wind, drive him hither :
Prepare to give the rugged *Vilant*
Such Entertainment as his Visit merits.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE a Chamber in the Cittadel.

Enter Agilmond.

Agil. Death, which at distance seems so terrible,
View'd nearer looks less dreadful; and to me
Has in it more to be desir'd than fear'd:
But to be Executed as a Ravisher,
Is something worse than death, 'tis death of Fame:
Yet even that Fate carries this Comfort with it,
The fatal Secret of my Sex dies with me,
And leaves the Queen in safety. Tho' I cannot
Be so unjust to my own Innocence,
To own so black a Guilt; yet since my death
Secures my Royal Mother, I'll suppress
The certain Means to clear me, and submit
To what the Gods and Fate have order'd for me.

Enter Ambiomor.

Amb. See! there he stands, calm and compos'd; nor does
One line in all that lovely Face, denote him
Lustful or Ravisher: When-e're I see him,
Something within me strongly pleads, and tells me
He must be innocent. If he be guilty,
The Gods themselves are faulty too, in giving him
So foul a Heart, and such a Face to hide it.
I must not let him know how much my thoughts
Are chang'd in favour of him. Solitude
And close Retirement often hold the Glass
To guilty Minds, and make them see their Faults.
In their true ugly Colours; have they had
The same effect on you? —

[To him.]

Agil. — A guilty Solitude
May have Effects like these; but Innocence
Is always best, when suffer'd to enjoy
The prospect of it self. —

Amb. — Then you still stand
Upon your first Defence? —

Agil. — I cannot alter:
Falschood is almost infinite, but Truth
Is still the same. —

Amb. — So very willingly
I would believe him, that I scarce can urge
A Reason to disprove him. What occasion
Led you so late into the Palace Walks,

[Aside.
To him.]

The Innocent Impostors.

43

And brought you back so hastily? ———

Agil. ——— Desire
To meet the lovely Princess led me thither;
And, tho I blush to own it, 'twas my Fear
That brought me back so soon. ———

Amb. ——— Your Fear! of what?

Agil. I thought, as I advanc'd, I heard some shrieks,
Which robb'd the Night of all its former stillness,
And gave it greater horror: Much amaz'd,
I durst not venture on, but soon return'd
Without one Moment's stay. ———

Amb. ——— This free account
Looks so like Truth, I cannot disbelieve it.
This is your Dagger, yesternight you drop'd it;
Can you remember where? ———

[*Aside.*

[*To him.*

Agil. ——— Nor where, nor when:
Only thus much I know, I mist it first
When from your Royal Mother I retir'd
With *Gunderic*. ———

Amb. ——— Now on a Prince's Word,
Which ought to be as sacred as the Oaths
Of Vulgar Souls, answer me truly; did you
Then miss your Dagger when you say, nor had it
In your possession since? ———

Agil. ——— By all my Hopes
Of Happiness, I never view'd it since,
Till you produc'd it now. ———

Amb. ——— My Lord, your words
Have stagger'd my Belief, and make me doubt
I have been led by false Appearances:
But till I'm more resolv'd, I must detain you
A Prisoner still: If you are Innocent,
That Knowledge will compose and calm your thoughts.
What pity 'tis, ye Gods, we seldom find
A just Resemblance of the Face and Mind!
Could we but read the Hearts of Men, like you,
What God-like Justice might we Monarchs do!

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V.

SCENE a Chamber-Royal.

Enter Gunderic and Amalazontha.

Gund. **T**hat Love by which you urge me to a grant,
 Denies your strange request ; Why should you tempt
 Unnecessary hazards ? your soft Sex,
 In safety plac'd, should leave to us the dangers.
 And drudgery of War.——

Amal. —— There is no danger :
 Or were it ne'er so great, I ought to share it
 As well as your Success ; besides, my *Agilmond*
 Is now at stake ; and every doubtful minute,
 By leaving me uncertain of his Fate,
 Will give me many Deaths.——

Gund. —— You shall o'ercome :
 But lest some fatal Dart should rob me of you,
 I'll once more offer Mercy, and my self
 In Person treat with them.——

[*Enter Ferrismond.*]

Fer. —— My Lord, your Forces
 Are all drawn up, and wait for your Commands.

Gund. Let them advance, and tell them, *Ferrismond*,
 My Queen and I will head them. This rash Boy [Exit *Ferrismond*.]
 Has by this vain Attempt giv'n me fair warning
 To make sure work ; and I with little pains
 May quash this young Rebellion.——

[*Enter a Vandal.*]

Vandal. —— Pardon, Sir,
 The luckless Bearer of unwelcome news :
 Old *Vinderic*, the *Gothish* General,
 Is at the head of thirty thousand Rebels.
 Advancing hither.——

Gund. —— Then we shall have work
 More tough than I expected. How near are they ?

Vandal. Last Night they quarter'd seven Leagues off, to Morrow
 Expect to see them here.——

Gund. —— I'm satisfi'd ;
 We shall have time enough to finish here
 Before they can arrive. O *Agilmond*,
 Thy Guilt, if prov'd, will more distract my Soul,
 Than the united Force of all my Enemies.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

The Innocent Impostors.

43

SCENE, the Cittadel.

Enter Ambiomere, Briomere, Albimere, Gothish Lords, &c.

Amb. Though long Experience join'd with daring Valour,
Are met in *Gunderic*, to make up an Enemy
Too great to be despis'd; yet your known Courage,
And our just Cause do give me full Assurance
Of wish'd Success: I feel an inward joy,
Which tells me this important Day will crown
Our forward hopes with vast Advantages.

Brio. May all those hopes prove true! or only fail
In promising less than your Fate performs!

Amb. My Lord, I thank you: *Gunderic*, I hear,
Whose fiery temper hates the dull delay
Of formally Besieging, has resolv'd
To carry us by Storm; we must prepare
To give him a sharp welcome. Hark! his Drums!
He's advancing towards us; let us all
Attend our several Charges. Come, my Lords,
Now let us shew the ancient *Gothish* Courage,
Which made the *Romans* tremble.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE A large Space before the Cittadel. Drums beat a March.

Enter Gunderic, Amalazontha, Genselaric, Ferrismond, Rodoric, Almeric, &c.

Gund. Though with our Arms in Hand 'tis much below us
To treat with Rebels, yet since you, my Queen
May be expos'd to some unlucky Arrow,
We'll condescend to parly. Let our Drums
Declare our pleasure to them. — [Drums beat a Parly, then Am-
(biomere, Briomere, &c. appear on the Walls.]

—— Which is he

You call *Ambiomere*, the new-found Prince?

Amb. I am *Ambiomere*, King of the *Goths*,
And rightful Owner of those large Dominions
Possess'd by *Rhadagaise*, my Royal Father.

Gund. To me he lost them; by this Arm he fell,
And with him fell his Kingdom. —

Amb. — You then claim

By right of Conquest only; and if I
By Strength of Arms can pluck that Title from you,

The

The right again is mine. —

Gund.

— O ! never hope it :
As soon you may from the avenging Pow'rs
Snatch their dread Bolts of Fury, as from me,
That which my Sword made mine. But listen now
To what my Pity of your Youth inclines me.
So well I love the Brave, that though this Action
Does savour more of Rashness, or Despair,
Than prudent Valour; yet, release the Prince,
Give up the Fortrefs, and return again
To your forsaken Duty, and your Fault
Shall die forgotten, like an idle Dream
That pass'd unheeded by. —

Amb.

— Such Dreams as these
Carry vast moment with them, and oft-times
Portend the fall of Monarchs. Think not, *Gunderic*,
That this attempt is like a short-liv'd Blaze
That dies as soon as kindl'd : no, the Justice
On which our Cause is built, though we should perish,
Would from the midst of your own Subjects raise
Some Valiant Spirit to redress our Wrongs,
And bravely strike to right a Ravish'd Virgin.

Gund. Be witness for me, Gods, how much I loath
A Villany like that ! How much my Heart
Deplores with Tears of Blood the Virtuous Princess !
And if the Prince be Guilty, not your self
Should run more greedily to just Revenge
Than I; no more I'll own him for my Son,
But blot him from my Memory for ever,
And give him up to Justice. —

Amb.

— 'Tis not safe
To venture so the Honour of our Race
Upon the partial Justice of a Father :
The soundest Proofs against so strong a Prejudice
Will weigh but little. —

Gund.

— How have I descended
Below my self, to bandy words with Rebels,
And in return, meet nothing but Contempt !
But I will rowze my sleeping Majesty,
And speak in Thunder to them. — Hear me you
That try beneath the Prince to shroud the Traitor,
Hear what your King commands. Deliver up
The Fortrefs straight, and with a quick Submission
Implore the Pardon you so proudly slighted.
Or the Revenge which I will take, shall stand
To after times exemplary and dreadful.

Amb.

Threats cannot frighten Men: now hear me, *Gunderic*.

The Innocent Impostors.

47

Not that I doubt the Issue, or despair
Of wish'd Success ; but that I may not leave
To chance, a thing of such vast consequence
As is our House's Honour, which would suffer
In wanting just Revenge ; soon as your Forces
Attempt our Strengths, the Head of *Agilmond*,
Reeking with Blood, shall be thrown over to you :
And the first hour of your Assault shall be
His last of Life. —

Amal. ——— The Head of *Agilmond* !
Forbid it, Heav'n ! rather let me disclose,
With hazard of my Life, the fatal Secret
Which has so long lain hid ! —

} *Aside.*

Gund. ——— You dare not act
What you would seem to threaten. —

Amb. ——— Let my daring
Be put to tryal, and you soon will find
How much I dare, or little. —

Gund. ——— Now, by Heav'n's,
He mocks my Anger, the insulting Boy !
And dallies with my Rage. But let me live
Branded with the base Names of Slave and Coward,
If any tame results of Blood or Nature
With-hold my just Revenge. *Genselaric*,
Begin th' Assault. Perish ten thousand Sons,
Rather than I'll endure Affronts like these :
Though *Agilmond* should fall, my Noble Vengeance
Shall, like another Son, keep up my Fame,
And make my Name Immortal. — [*Is going, Amalazontha holds him.*]

Amal. ——— Stay ! O stay !
My Royal Husband ; and before you go
To this most fatal Conflict, give one Moment
To the sad Transports of a mourning Mother :
And you *Ambiomer*, attend a while,
For I have mighty Wonders to disclose.

Gund. What means the Woman ? Can you have ought to say
That may at such a time as this be worth
One Moment's stop ? —

Amal. ——— Yes, my lov'd Lord, I have. [*Kneeling.*]
But first unbend your Brow, whilst on my Knees
I humbly beg your Pardon, that I durst
Thus long deceive you : *Agilmond* is not
What he appears, nor could commit a Rape
On fair *Eurione*. —

Gund. ——— You speak in Riddles ;
Explain your mystick meaning, and dispatch us

Amal. Let me not lose your Love for ever, when

I tell you he's a Woman.——

Gund. —— Ha! a Woman!

Amb. Ye Gods! can this be true?——

Amal. —— Put off your wonder,

Whilst I unfold the mighty Mystery.

When you, my Lord, went to the *Gotbifh* War,

You left me pregnant;

And your impatient wishes for a Son

Forc'd out a Solemn Vow, that if my Issue

Prov'd Female, it should die.——

Gund. —— 'Tis true, I did so;

And though the Vow was rash, yet being made,

I had not fail'd to keep it.——

Amal. —— Too well I know it;

And therefore many doubtful Conflicts pass'd

'Twixt a Wife's Duty, and a Mother's tenderness:

Nature at last o'recame, and made me venture

What most I fear'd, your Anger, nay, your Hatred,

To save a harmless Babe. My time drew near;

And I, assisted by two faithful Servants,

Dispos'd all things with privacy and care

To favour the deceit: My pangs were short,

And soon rewarded with the happy Birth

Of a most lovely Child, but as my fears

Too truly had suggested, of that Sex

Which you had doom'd to Death. I then resolv'd

To put in practice what I long design'd,

And bred it as a Male.——

Gund. —— 'Tis wondrous strange!

How could you blind the piercing eyes of those

Whom I at my departure had appointed

To pry into its Sex?——

Amal. —— A new born Male

Was by my Faithful Confidants prepar'd;

Which hid within the Bed, and drawn from thence,

Confirm'd them all that I had born a Son:

My Infant Daughter was for some few Weeks,

Under pretence of Sicknefs, bred in private;

And for her real Name of *Elismonda*,

Took that of *Agilmond*.——

Gund. —— The strange Events

Of this amazing day have been so wonderful,

Methinks I stand prepar'd to credit firmly

The most unlikely News. 'Tis you, ye Gods,

Whose over-ruling Providence contriv'd

This Maze of Fate! and Kings, though Gods on Earth

Must not contest with you! Nor have I lost

By this Exchange ; since for a Son, whose weakness
Has often made me blush, I gain a Daughter
Well worth the owning. Madam, rise ; and let
This strict Embrace atone for all the troubles
Which my rash Vow has caus'd you.——

Amal.

——Let me thus [Kneeling again.
Receive, the mighty Blessing.——

Gund.

——Now, *Ambiomer*,
You see the rash Mistakes to which your Passion
Has led you Blindfold : *Agilmond*, you find,
Cannot be guilty of that horrid Rape
Of which he stands accus'd.——

Amb.

——My Lord, I know it ;
And 'tis with wondrous shame that I reflect
On the unworthy treatment I have given
That injur'd Princess : But it is not yet
Too late to make amends, and my Repentance
Shall move with winged haste. Madam, I go
To send you that lov'd Daughter, which has been
So much the Care of Heav'n. But oh ! my Sister !
Where shall we find the Lustful Villain now,
That robb'd thee of thy Honour ?——

Gund.

——Stay, *Ambiomer*,
And hear me speak ; I see so much of Honour
Break through your gusts of Passion, that at once
I pity and esteem you ; and to shew it,
Invite you to come forth : On a King's Word,
(And he who trusts my Honour, never shall
Have reason to repent him) you shall meet
With Honourable Usage. Fate and I
Have mighty thinks in store for your advantage,
Unless your own Distrust of both defeat them.

Brio. Consider, Sir, e'er you consent too easily,
That the whole Fortune of the *Gothish* Nation
Depends upon your Conduct. *Amb.* I will answer
For the Success of what I now design :
I see his aim, nor will I doubt his Honour.
My Lord, I am resolv'd to trust your Honour,
And wait the Princess home : But first be pleas'd
To draw your Forces off, that my Surrender
May have no shew of Fear.——

Gund.

——*Genselaric*,
Conduct them off ; come, my *Amalazontha*,
The Triumphs which were destin'd for this day
Shall yet go on, and, tho thus cross'd, shall join
A double Crown for ever in our Line.

[Drums beating,
Trumpets sounding.

[Exit *Gund.* &c. below, *Ambiomer*, &c. above.

SCENE, A Chamber in the Cittadel.

Enter Ambiomar and Briomer.

Brio. You know, my Lord, 'twas always my Opinion,
That *Agilmond* was Innocent; and once
I hinted to you, my suspicions tended
Another way; they're now so much confirm'd,
I dare impart them to you.——

Amb. —— Good my Lord,
Inform me quickly, that my Rage may find
A lawful Object, and my Breast be quieted
With Hopes of just Revenge for my wrong'd Sister.

Brio. As it appear'd unlikely, that the Prince
Should snatch by force what the succeeding night
Had giv'n him freely; so it seem'd to me
Most probable, that some despairing Lover,
Cut off from all his Hopes, should force the Joy,
Which otherwise he was to lose for ever:
This made me doubt the General; with whose love
To fair *Eurione* I'm well acquainted,
And had it from himself.——

Amb. —— His love to her
The Queen inform'd me of; but that alone
Seems much too weak a ground to judge him Guilty.

Brio. I grant, my Lord, it is; and therefore this
Did but awake my Doubts: What shock'd me more,
Was that I learn'd he had not been at home
During that dismal Night.——

Amb. —— I must confess
Such an unusual absence look'd suspicious.

Brio. But that which most confirms me that he was
The Ravisher, is the Confusion visible
In him and his upon the late Discovery
Of *Agilmond's* true Sex; for I my Eyes
Did rivet to their Faces, and observ'd
More than Surprise, Vexation, Grief, and Care,
With frequent Whispers, and such cloudy Looks
As Guilty Men can never well put off.

Amb. Continue, my dear *Briomer*, to make
Your Observations still.

But I will yet be calm, and when our Doubts
Are grown up into Certainties, fall on him
With unresisted Fury.——Is the Princess
Yet ready to depart?——

[Enter Albimer.]

My Lord, she is:

The Innocent Impostors.

51

And in her Female Habit looks so lovely,
That none, except the fair *Eurione*,
Can vie with her for Beauty.—

Amb. ——— When she pass'd
For *Agilmond*, her Features and Complexion
Were much too delicate for what she seem'd.
My Lords, let all attend her to the Palace;
The King, though cruel, has a generous Soul,
And will not wrong our Trust.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE a rich Hall in the Palace.

Enter *Gunderic*, *Amalazontha*, *Genselaric*, *Ferrismond*, *Rodoric*, *Almeric*, *Guards* and *Attendants*.

Gund. How strange are all the turns of Providence!
And by what secret steps does Heav'n advance
Its own designs, and mock our humane Prudence!
Yet where it means to bless, it makes us happy
By Methods hid from us: This day's design
Was to unite in Bands of lasting Friendship
The *Vandals* and the *Goths*, and join by Marriage
The double Royal Line; and that intent
This happy day will finish, but by ways
Unthought of, unforeseen: a Male and Female
Are on each side discover'd, long conceal'd
For Reasons almost equal; Fate has match'd them,
And the agreeing course of both their lives
Has mark'd them each for other.—

Amal. ——— 'Tis so visible,
That to oppose it were to fight with Heav'n,
And counterplot the Wisdom of the Gods.

Gund. I long to see the new found *Elismonda*
Dress'd in her Sex's Habit; if she bears
Her change as well as young *Ambiomer*,
I shall not much regret the loss of *Agilmond*.

Amal. He has, indeed, a charming Manly Beauty,
Which challenges at once, Respect and Love.

But hark! your Subjects joy proclaim their coming; [Shouts within.
And see, they're here already—— [Enter *Ambiomer*, *Elismonda*

{ in her own habit, *Briomer*, *Albimer*,
Gothish Lords, &c.

——— O! my Daughter;
Is it then giv'n me to embrace you thus?
To call you *Elismonda*? and behold you
Confess'd what Nature meant you?——

Gund. Accept, my Daughter,

[Embracing her.]

A Father's Penitence, who ne'er had pass'd
So harsh a Doom upon your Infant State,
Could he have then foreseen the mighty Joys
Your riper Years have brought him.——

Elis. ——Royal Sir,
Excuse a Criminal that dar'd to live
When doom'd to death by you.——

Gund. ——Let us blot out
The sad Remembrances, and turn our thoughts
To Scenes of welcome Joy.——To you, brave Prince,
And your mistaken Zeal, we owe the blest
Discov'ry of this Secret; and your firm
Reliance on my Honour, has engag'd
My grateful Soul to make you large Returns;
Nor shall they be delay'd: but where's the Queen
Your Royal Mother?——

[To Amb.

Amb. ——With my mourning Sister.
Gund. Alas! poor injur'd Innocence! How I lov'd her,
My late design of matching her with *Agilmond*
Sufficiently exprest; how now I pity her,
My dire Revenge upon the lustful Villain,
Whene'er found out, that robb'd her of her Honour,
Shall loudly prove. But say, *Ambiomer*,
On what strange ground did your Suspicion work,
To fix the Guilt of such an horrid Action
On the supposed *Agilmond*?——

Amb. ——I never
Should dare to look upon this injur'd Princess
Had I not gone upon the strongest Circumstances
That could engage Belief. Your Majesty
Well knows this Dagger; in the very place
Where that foul Villany was done, I found it.

Elis. I know not where I lost it, but I guess,
'Twas in the *Gothish* Queen's Apartment.——

Fer. ——Madam,
I saw you drop it there; and I remember
I stoop'd to take it up, but was prevented
By *Rodoric*.——

Brio. ——My Lord, observ'd you that? [To Amb. *aside*.

Gund. By *Rodoric*? He then must needs be able
To give us some account of this dire action.
Come hither, *Rodoric*; you know that Dagger?

Rod. My Lord, I think I oft have seen it worn
By our fair Princess.——

Gund. ——Had you it of late
In your Possession? Speak.——

——No, Royal Sir.

The Innocent Impostors.

59

Fer. Sure you forget ; I saw you take it up
But Yesterday. ———

Rod. ——— 'Tis true, indeed, I did ;
But lost it soon. ———

Gund. ——— It must be so, he falters :
By all my hopes of Glory, he's the Villain.
My Guards, there, seize and bear him hence to Torture ;
We'll see what Sense the Rack will force from him.

Gen. So much I hate a Crime so black as his,
I'll see him rack'd my self, and bring your Majesty
A just account. ——— [Briomer whispers the King.]

Gund. ——— My Lord, you much amaze me :
But nought shall be omitted, that may serve
To solve this fatal Riddle. Seize the General.

Gen. Me ! Royal Sir ? ———

Gund. ——— I will not hear him speak.
Intreat the Queen and Ravish'd Princess hither. [Exit Briomer.]
Now bear that Villain forth. You, *Ferrismond*,
Go see him rack'd, and bring me an account
Of what he shall discover. ———

Rod. In vain you seek what you must never find ;
An Innocence like mine can laugh at Torments.
[Is carried off, Ferrismond attends, &c.]

Gund. ——— Now, *Ambiomer*,
Prepare to see what just Revenge I'll take
Upon the Lustful Slave that durst pollute
The Sacred Blood of Kings. ———

Amb. ——— This Royal Justice
For ever makes me yours. ———

Enter Rhadegonda, Eurione in Mourning, and Briomer.

Eur. Ah ! whither do you lead me, cruel *Briomer* ?
Let me for ever hide my Face in Darkness :
I am not fit for Light ; a stain like mine
Should seek for Everlasting Night to cover it.
Brio. Madam, the King invites you to assist
In the discovery of the cursed Ravisher,
And then to taste the Pleasure of just Vengeance.
Eur. Vengeance ? will that restore my Ravish'd Honour ?
I cannot bear their eyes ; already see
All turn and gaze, as if they saw a Monster.

Gund. Approach, fair Sufferer ; and suspend a while
Your cruel Griefs, to entertain a Joy
The Gods themselves are fond of, just Revenge.
View this supposed Criminal ; not my Blood
Which flows within his Veins, shall privilege him.

Eur. Oh I have seen enough : the Ring ! the Ring !

[*Swoons away, they chase her, she recovers.*]

Amb. What means my best lov'd Sister ?——

Eur. ——O that Ring !

It was impossible so black a Crime
Should be conceal'd for ever. That bright Jewel,
Worn by the Lustful Villain, glitter'd then
Through all the shades of Night, and now reveals
The curst Ravisher.——

Amb. ——O ye just Gods,
By what amazing ways you make the Guilty
Meet their just Vengeance !——

[*Enter Ferrismond.*]

Fer. ——*Rodoric*, Royal Sir,
Has on the Rack-accus'd *Genjelaric*
To be the Actor of this horrid Rape,
And that himself and *Almeric* assisted him.

Gund. Secure that other Villain ! How was I
Mistaken in this Monster !

Amb. ——Speak, foul Ravisher,
What Devil prompted you to such an Action
As Fiends would blush to own ?

Gen. ——'Twas Love, or Lust,
Give it which name you will. The mighty Pleasure
I then receiv'd, will scarce be bought too dear
By all that I can suffer. *Rodoric*
Can tell you more : For me, I vow to keep
An Everlasting silence.——

Gund. ——Force of Torture
Shall break your wilful silence, and compel you
To Groan, if not to speak.——

Amb. ——My Royal Lord,
When first I found this Weapon, I vow'd solemnly,
That my sad Soul should never taste of Quiet,
Till in the lustful Villain's Blood I drench'd
The thirsty Blade.——Thus I perform my Vow.
And though the foulness of a Guilt like yours
Deserves the common Hangman to avenge it ;
Yet since the Royal Blood of *Gunderic*
Flows in your Veins, die by a Prince's hand.

[*Stabs Gen.*]

Gund. Young Man, you are too rash.——

Amb. ——Thus low I beg
Your Royal Pardon, and submit my self
To what your justly kindled Rage ordains.
I hearken'd to my wrongs ; and they allow'd me
No leisure to consult with due respect.

[*Kneeling.*]

Gund. Rise up, brave Prince ; I only grieve he met
A Fate so Noble. Fair *Eurione*,

This Virgin will endeavour to divert you,
And make you lose your Sorrows.—

Eur. ——— Royal Sir,

Could my lost state admit of any Comfort,
I sure, should find it there. But Life has nothing
That I can relish now. Blest opportunity!
I see the friendly means to end my Sorrow,
And make my Fame Immortal;
But shall I mix my Blood with such a Villain's?
Stain'd and polluted as it is, 'tis fit
To mingle with no other.

[*Aside.*
[*Sees the Dagger.*

Amb. ——— Hold, *Eurione*!

What has despairing Sorrow forc'd you to?

Eur. To seek the only cure for that distemper
Which I have labour'd under. Nor had I wav'd
This Remedy so long, but that I waited
To see my injur'd Honour first reveng'd.
What farther use of Life can I propose?
Since nothing more is to be lost or gain'd;
My Honour gone, and my Revenge obtain'd.

[*Dies.*

Rhad. Alas! my Daughter!

The Gods must have in store mighty Reserves
Of Happiness, to make you just amends
For what you suffer'd here.—

Amb. ——— O Royal Victim!

How does the Soul of our Immortal Father
Look down with Joy upon his dying Offspring,
And bless his Noble Issue.—

Amal. Let not unprofitable Sorrow, Madam,
Make you insensible of solid Joys;

Eurione has gain'd a Fame by dying,
Which the most happy life may envy.—

Gund. ——— Madam,

You mourn a Daughter lost, to fill her room
Accept this Maid, the only Prop and Comfort
Of my declining Age; in gaining her
I lost a Son; but shall be much o'erpaid,
If this brave Prince will take his empty place,
And let me call him mine.—

Rhad. ——— What vast returns
Of Gratitude am I oblig'd to make
For such a mighty Present?—

Amb. ——— Let me thus

[*Knocking.*

Low on my Knees receive the glorious Fortune
Your Goodness has design'd me. If you, Madam,
Consent to favour my aspiring hopes
The Blessing will be infinite.

35
The King commands,
And I must ne'er dispute his Royal Will.

Gund. Draw near *Ambiomer* and *Elismonda*;
Thus I unite your hands, and may this be
A Match of Nations, whilst the *Goths* and *Vandals*
Link'd in a firm Alliance look on you
As on their double Pledge of mutual Friendship.

Amb. All my past Grievs are swallow'd up and lost
In this vast tide of Joy : and Fate has given
More than my most aspiring hopes could aim at.
Come, beauteous *Elismonda*, let's prepare
To meet Love's richest Joys : And from our Fate
The World may learn this Lesson, that the Gods,
While Human Policy contends in vain,
Will their own Ends by their own Ways obtain.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

FINIS.
